MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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AD DEADLINE (with payment) is the 15th of the month. Issue comes out by the second week of following month, and the cover date is the month after that.

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COVER: Nots from "Decadence" video shoot by Leah Hunt / Orden Mundial in Mallorca by Martin Sorrondeguy
BACK COVER: Parasytes at A Varning From Montreal by Darryl Reid

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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

GRACE AMBROSE

- NOTS – We Are Nots LP / SLANT 6 – Soda Pop*Rip Off LP
- CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- SICK THOUGHTS – Moral Sickness EP
- ANIMALS & MEN – Don't Misbehave in the New Age 45
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- DARK TIMES – Give LP
- NERV – USA Off Earth Now! EP
- V/A – Bay Area Retrograde, Vol. 2 LP
- DEATHWISH – Tailgate 12"

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- V/A – Bart Bay Area Retrograde Vol. 2– LP
- ΑΔΙΕΞΟΔΟ / ΓΕΝΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΧΑΟΥΣ – split LP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- COPYCATS – An Idea Dies… LP
- PELUQUERÍA CANINA – Cerebros EP
- CADAVER EM TRANSE – LP
- LAS VENAS – Vamos Por la Calle EP
- LUCHA ETERNA – Asceroso EP
- ACID BABY JESUS – 45 / NOTS – We Are Nots LP
- RAKTA – 45 & live / HORROR VACUI live

MATT BADENHOP

- CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- ΑΔΙΕΞΟΔΟ / ΓΕΝΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΧΑΟΥΣ – split LP
- OBEDIENCIA live
- ERA OF FEAR live
- MÜLLTÜTE live
- DISPLAY live
- ABSURDO live
- KANDAHAR live
- POLIO & JULIE live
- LEVITATIONS live

WILL BLOMQUIST

- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45 & live
- V/A – Bay Area Retrograde Vol. 2 LP
- POISON GIRLS – Chappaquiddick Bridge LP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP / ORCHID – Totality LP
- SLANG – Devastation In The Void CD
- NO FAITH – Fortress World EP
- PELUQUERÍA CANINA – Cerebros EP
- ANIMALS & MEN – Don't Misbehave in the New Age 45
- SHARKPACT – Run LP / HORROR VACUI / VIVID SEKT – live
- TRACERS / SYNDICATE – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- MANATEEES – Sit N Spin LP & live
- USELESS EATERS – Bleeding Moon LP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- AUSMUTEANTS – Order of Operation LP
- V/A – Bay Area Retrograde Vol. 2 LP
- GINO & THE GOONS – Shake It LP
- V/A – Gonerfest 11 7"
- SICK THOUGHTS – LP, EP & 10"
- TIMMY'S ORGANISM live

ROBERT COLLINS

- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45 & live
- SO SLOW – 777/Noyon 45
- TRENCHES / LIES / BUSTED OUTLOOK live
- CADAVER EM TRANSE – LP
- NERV – USA Off Earth Now! EP
- LAS CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- GENERACION SUICIDA / FLESH WORLD live
- WHITE ASS live / MEATBODIES – LP / CP/M live
- THE BLIND SHAKE – Breakfast of Failures CD
- DECADES / FAILURES – split tape / TRUCKDRIVER – tape

LAYLA GIBBON

- NOTS – We Are Nots LP / SLANT 6 – Soda Pop*Rip Off
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido 45 / FUGAZI – First Demo LP
- LAS VENAS – Vamos Por la Calle EP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- DARK TIMES – Give LP
- THE MODERNS – When She Gets Back EP
- V/A – Bay Area Retrograde Vol. 2 LP
- DEATHWISH – Tailgate 12"
- REAL NUMBERS – What Was and What Is CD

DAN GOETZ

- BUSTED OUTLOOK / NO STATIK – live
- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45
- LAS CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- HOUNDS OF HATE – Hate Springs Eternal LP
- SCALPED – At A Cross EP / NERV – USA Off Earth Now! EP
- ORCHID – Totality LP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- URBANOIA – Psykisk Terror EP
- LUCHA ETERNA – Asceroso EP
- BREAKOUT – True Crime EP / SLUGGA – demo

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER

- LAS VENAS – Vamos Por la Calle EP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- COPYCATS – An Idea Died LP
- THE MONSIEURS – LP / NERV – USA Off Earth Now! EP
- KILL THE HIPPIES – You Will Live With Us Forever LP
- LEBAKKO – Elävien Kuolleiden Yö LP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- AUSMUTEANTS – Order of Operation LP
- SHARKPACT – Run LP
- SSEEPAGE – Depelted Sseepage LP

KENNY KAOS

- WHITE ASS – Baby Blue LP
- YOUNG LADIES – We Get By LP
- AUSMUTEANTS – Fed Through A Tube/Arguments 45
- THE MODERNS – When She Gets Back EP
- GINO & THE GOONS – Shake It LP
- USELESS EATERS – Bleeding Moon LP
- FLESH LIGHTS – Free Yourself LP
- SO COW – The Long Con LP
- AUSMUTEANTS – Order of Operation LP
- ZERO BOYS – Monkey LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- NOTS – We Are Nots LP / AUSMUTEANTS – LP & 45
- MANATEEES – Sit N Spin LP / GET HIGH BOYS – GHB EP
- GINO AND THE GOONS – Shake It Up! LP
- THE SEX RAYS – Midnight Caller/Where's the Tambourine? 45
- THE MONSIEURS – LP / WHITE ASS – Baby Blue LP
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45
- SICK THOUGHTS – Fat Kid With A 10" & EP
- GOODBYE TO LANGUAGE 3D – film

RAY LUJAN

- BUZZCOCKS – The Way CD
- CHEAP CASSETTES – All Anxious All The Time CD
- LESTER GREENOWSKI – It's Nothing Serious But Life CD
- THE MANDATES – Suspicion/Wastin' Time 45
- NEW JUNK CITY – LP / THE NO MARKS – Light of One LP
- PETS – Get Turned On CD
- REV. NORB AND THE ONIONS – LP
- YOUNG LADIES – We Get By LP
- HOT WATER MUSIC live / THE ADICTS live
- SONIC AVENUES live

FRED SCHRUNK

- BLACK RAINBOW – LP
- CRUDE STUDS live
- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45
- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- SHARK PACT – Run LP
- CADAVER EM TRANSE – LP
- POISON GIRLS – Chappaquiddick Bridge LP
- PELUQUERIA CANINA – Cerebros EP
- LAS CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- LAS VENAS – Vamos Por la Calle EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- TOTAL CONTROL – Typical System LP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – Culture Demanufacturer LP
- RAKTA – Tudo Que É Sólido/Serpente 45
- AUSMUTEANTS – LP & 45
- CADAVER EM TRANSE – LP
- NERV – USA Off Earth Now! EP
- SICK THOUGHTS – Moral Sickness EP
- LUCHA ETERNA – Asceroso EP
- LAS CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP
- DEATHWISH – Tailgate 12"

DIANA VASHTI

(Banned) In D.C.

ZINE TOP FIVE

- *El Futuro No Se Vende* #1
- *Fun-O-Planet*
- *Kill Your Parents Garden* #8
- *Médiocritée Innée*
- *Rock n' Roll Vacation*

DEMO TOP FIVE

- DECADES / FAILURES – split tape
- DISSLATE – Tiempos Cruciales tape
- FREAK VIBE – tape
- MYSTERIOUS SKIN – tape
- SLUGGA – tape

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#81/Feb '90. The Hard-Ons, Concrete Sox, Naturecore, Blockade, Public Humiliation, 7 Minutes of Nausea, Colera, Rhythm Collision, Zero Boys reunion.

#144/May '95. Piss Shivers, Back with a Bung!, Screamer, Nekhei Naatza, US Bombs, Jayne County, Stitches, Loudmouths, Fightingcause, Price of Silence, Bob Suren/Failure Face, Circus Ridiculous

#145/June '95. Conflict, No Empathy, Schleprock, Screw 32, The Harries, The Rejects, Badger, MC5, Bob Cutler, Ted Rall & his cartoons

#146/July '95. Riverdales, TPOS, Bristles, Express of Fur, Spanakorzo, Underhand, Schleprock, Aut Aut, Head, McCrackins, Chaos Days.

#147/Aug '95. Swingin' Utters, Skonk, Mickey and the Big Mouths, Norman Mayer Group, Overbass, Respect, Undersirables, Das Klown, Nothing of Merit, Lunkhead, The Stooges.

#149/Oct '95. Campus Tramps, Richard the Roadie, Bad Luck Streak, Chumpslap, Diferentes Actitudes Juveniles, The Humpers, pet UFO, No Violence, Manic Hispanic.

#150/Nov '95. New York Loose, Splatterheads, Pipe, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Snap-Her, Pregnant Men, Sick Boys, Smellie Fingers, Essential 50s.

#151 pt.1/Dec '95. Padded Cell, Pleasure Fuckers, Supersnazz, Discordance Axis, Squirtgun, 100, 00 Body Bags, Diaboliks, Titans, Misfits.

#151 pt.2/Dec '95. My White Bread Mom, The Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/humanity, Stains, Lowdowns, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue, Beatnik Termites.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottomfeeders, Slip, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-fract, Dead End Kids, The Heartbreakers.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hachetface, ADZ, Karen Monster, NOTA, Little Ugly Girls, Stun Guns, Gutfiddle, Dimestore Haloes, Ocymoron.

#154/Mar '96. The Motards, Subincision, Stisism, The Donnas, The Stallions, Count Backwards, Final Warning.

#155/Apr '96. Hockey Teeth, The Surfin' Turnips, Pussy Crush, Cro-Mags, High Plains Drifter, Slight Slappers, Third Degree, Anti-Flag.

#156 pt.1/May '96. Fumes, Public Toys, Crunch, Peter and the Test Tube Babies, Nails of Hawaiian, Splash Four, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#157/June '96. Sons of Hercules, The Heroines, The Criminals, The Rudiments, The Brain Bats, Chinese Millionaires, Your Mother, Against All Authority, Yellow Scab, Wardance.

#158/July '96. The Gain, The Process, Brother Inferior, The Problematics, Judge Nothing, Ashlet Von Hurter and the Haters, Working Stiffs, The Break-Ups, Buzzcocks.

#159/Aug '96. The Smugglers, The Tone-Deaf Pig Dogs, Round Ear Spock, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. The Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, The Mormons, John Q Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Apocalypse Babys, The Business, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothng Cool, Gob, Sink, Sires, Newton Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Candy Snatchers, The Phantom Surfers, The Stain, Panic, The Hysterics, National Guard, Torches to Rome, Restos Fosiles Maniacs, Snuka, Redemption 87, Torture Kitty.

#164/Jan '97. Naked Aggression, Lil Bunnies, Sparkle More, Tab Hunter, Bar Feeders, Jabberwocky, Auto Control, The Hookers, Epileptix, Acrid, The Vibrators.

#165/Feb '97. Blanks 77, savage Malignant, Emily's Sassy Lime, The Real McKenzies, The Millionaires, Dropkick Murphys, The No-Talents, The Hives, Sea Monster, He's Dead Jim, Defiance, Bou Sou Nezumi, The Freeze. Richard Hell.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew, Dead Boys.

#170/July '97. Gauze, No Fraud, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, The Forgotten, Thee Viceroys, Brian/Grand Theft Audio Records, Dank Jones, Kuro.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Patrick Grindstaff/Pelado Records, Misnathropists, Race Traitor, violent Socity, Knuckleheads.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, The Bristols, My 3 Scu, The Space Shits, Chris/Pessimiser Records, The Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. The Education Issue. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder Bladder Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity.

#175/Dec '97. Boiling Man, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Halos, Exploding Crustaceans, Heartdrops, Last Year's Youth, One Man Army, Piao Chong, Those Unknown.

#176/Jan '98. The Wongs, Palatka, Stalingrad vs. Voorhees interview, Upstairs People, Squidboy, Izgoy, Beltones, Skygrain, Scared of Chakra, 1-4-5's, Ducky Boys, Jon Cougar Concentration.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Useless ID, Dropout, Society Gone Mad, Pinhead Circus, Quarantine, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Dehumanized, Chumbawamba revisited.

#178/Mar '98. Forgotten Rebels, Pervirella, Dirtys, Letterbombs, Go-Devils/Gyogun Rend's/Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, American Steel.

#179/Apr '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Chapter Eleven Records, Randumbs, Garage Rats, Spat & the Guttersnipes, They Still Make Records, P.A.W.N.S., Poser, Douche Flag, Explosive Kate.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Jack Saints, Discontent, Mademoiselle Records, Slack Factor, Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Eyeliners, Infiltrators, TV Killers.

#181/June '98. Radio Rebels, Gainesville Free Radio, Reclaiming the Airwaves, All Bets off, Bonecrusher, Summer Jack, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, Cell Block Five, Grapefruit, D.D.I., Normals.

#182/July '98. The Headcoatees, B-Movie Rats, Vapids, Manchurian Candidates, Squiggy, Jumpin' Landmines, Gob, Texas Terri & The Stiff Ones, Budget Girls, Bruisers, Dead End Kids, .nema, Discount.

#185/Oct '98. Beatnik Termites, Wimpy Dicks, NME, Raxola, Armed and Hammered, Traitors, Dylan McKays, W.O.R.M., Tezacrifico, Roswells.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. The Real Kids, Cretins, Sawn Off, Third Party, Heroines, Spider Cunts, No Class. Holidays in the Sun, Dead Kennedys.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#191/Apr '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Kangaroo Records, Burning Kitchen, Polythene, Iggy Scam.

#193/June '99. Munster Records, DS-13, Safety Pins, Mullets, Pussycats, Piolines, Bad Stain, Houseboy, Bodies, False Alarm, Darlington.

#194/July '99. Fokkewolf, God Hates Computers, Deathreat, Kid Dynamite, Last Machine, Aside, Hoppin Mad, Flesh Eating Creeps, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, CU Next Tuesday Records, RC5, The Havenots, Ill Tempered, Revlons, Dysentery, Larry and the Go Nowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Product X, The Pricks, Orchid, Reaching Forward, Grissle, Third Degree, Catharsis, Emerge.

#197/Oct '99. Lower Class Brats, Waifle, Reducers SF, Showcase Showdown, Futuro Incierto, Deadstate, Reactor No. 7, GodsHateKansas.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, The Victims, Shotwell, Outlast, Pressure Point, A//Political, Bump-N-Uglies, The Dictators.

#199/Dec '99. The Locust, Enemy Soil, Mt St Helens, Rejuvenate, Black Cat Music, Ratos De Porao, United Super Villains, Razlog Za, G-3.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Helvis, Ancient Chinese Secret, The Curse, Skipard Reason (Christian Corner), Hers Never Existed, Toxic Narcotic, Big Boys.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/Mar '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, GOre Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Aus Rotten, 9 Shocks Terror, Hissy Fits, Anti/Dogmatikss, White Stripes, Rumpshaker fanzine, artists Fly & Seth Tobocman.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#215/Apr '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records.

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#219/Aug '01. Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, P.U.N.K., Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sept '01. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum.

#221/Oct '01. Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, Salad Days author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing.

#223/Dec '01. Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS-13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. Cheetah Chrome, Caustic Christ, Haymaker, Stardumb Records, and more.

#233/Oct '02. Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 Dec '02. Anti-War Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?," "Unfinished American Revolution" and "Axis of Empire," Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn, Long Island DIY scene report.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut The Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, The Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC, " Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What The Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, TRUST zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/Apr '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vra.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany scene reports.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/Mar '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/Apr '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/Aug '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida scene report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/Oct '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/Nov '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/Dec '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/Jan '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/Feb '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/Mar '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (part two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/Aug '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/Sept '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & worldwide punk scene reports.

#281/Oct '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/Nov '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, TRUST zine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/Dec '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris zine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/Jan '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) part one, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/Feb '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) part two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona scene report.

#286/Mar '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/Apr '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/Aug '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannan, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page MRR retrospective photo spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/Sept '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/Oct '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/Nov '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/Dec '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/Jan '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/Feb '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/Mar '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/Apr '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/Aug '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photo spread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/Sept '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/Oct '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/Nov '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/Jan '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/Feb '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/Mar '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/Aug '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/Sept '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany scene report.

#318/Nov '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/Dec '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/Mar '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/Apr '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial, , Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/Aug '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian scene report, Ratcharge zine, and Culo.

#328/Oct '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic scene reports.

#330/Nov '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland scene report.

#333/Feb '11. The Welders, Touch & Go fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela scene report, Olympia scene report.

#334/Mar '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC scene report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian scene report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This Is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY scene report.

#338/July '11. Zouo, Inservibles, Krömosom, Useless Eaters, Nightgaun, No Problem, Raw Nerves, Family Man Lost Tribe.

#339/Aug '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise Records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History part 2.

#340/Sept '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History part 3.

#341/Oct '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel zine.

#342/Nov '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/Dec '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/Jan '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses zine.

#345/Feb '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/Mar '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/Apr '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii scene report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek scene report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/Aug '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/Sept '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/Oct '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/Nov '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary part 2, Girth records.

#355/Dec '12. Avi Spivak, Red Dons, the Estranged, Agrimonia, Antimelodix, Napolnariz, La Armada, DHK, Breathing Light, the Victims European tour diary, Hamilton Ontario scene.

#357/Feb '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/Mar '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/Apr '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power zine part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, TRUST zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power zine part II.

#363/Aug '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/Sept '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/Population Zero, Texas Filth scene report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ scene report.

#366/Nov '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/Dec '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War//Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/Jan '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International queer scene report.

#369/Feb '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Voight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kle-er Blast Suntan.

#370/Mar '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

#371/April '14. Bill Bondsman, Crapoulet Records, O! Kult, Rational Animals, Stab, Woolf, Varix, New York's Alright Fest, Miami scene report.

#372/May '14. EU's Arse, Siege, XAXAXA, Razorcake, Alert! Alert! Space Wolves, Rhythm of Cruelty, Straight Crimes, PMMA, Strange Attractor, Revenge of the Psychotronic Man, Scotland scene report.

#373/June '14. Anti You, Crusades, Rat Damage, Hank., Cottaging, Pesadilla, Distopika, Fed Up Fest, Damn Broads, Destry Hampton, Ben Snakepit & Mitch Clem, Los Culitos, The Lowest.

#374/July '14. No Babies, Grand Collapse, Gulag Beach, 1984, Quaaludes, Ausmuteants, Countdown to Armageddon, Wañuy, Fear of the Future, Bishops Green, Colombia scene report, Igor Vidmar, Endless Grinning Skulls.

#375/Aug '14. Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Eiefits, Extreme Noise Records, Vertigo, Glue, S.U.S, Svin: Leningrad Punk Progenitor, Thee Mighty Fevers, Cool Death Records, Miscalculations, Born Wrong Tour Diary.

#376/Sept '14. Dishrags, Gas Rag, SHIT, Iron Lung Records, Far-Out Fangtooth, Kuudes Silmä, Maailmanloppu, Paul Birnbaum of Septic Death, Extincion de los Insectos, Patras, Greece scene report, Traces in the Snow: '80s Siberian Punk.

#377/Oct '14. Fracaso, Frightwig, Government Flu, Mymanmike, Mind Cure Records, Era Of Fear, Men Oh Pause, Elegy, Harsh Words, photos from Beserktown Fest & NY's Latino Punk Fest, Mexico City scene report, Yecatl Peña.

#378/Nov '14. Yugoslavia Retrospective part 1: Slovenia w/ Buldogi, ToŽibabe, Indust-Bag, Quod Massacre, Pankrti, Grupa 92, Šund, and Kuzle. Also: Big Zit, Ooze, Yi, Supreme Echo Label, Philly's Rockers! show photos, Australia scene report.

FOREIGN DISTROS

BELOW IS A LIST OF SOME OF THE MANY NON-US DISTROS THAT CURRENTLY CARRY MRR. WE PROVIDE THIS LIST SO YOU KNOW WHERE TO GET MRR INTERNATIONALLY! WE DO OUR BEST TO COVER AS MUCH TERRITORY OUTSIDE OF THE US AS WE CAN, BUT WE STILL WANT TO DISTRIBUTE TO MORE PARTS OF THE WORLD! WE NEED YOUR HELP IN ESTABLISHING CONTACTS WITH PUNKS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN CARRYING MRR. IF YOU HAVE A DISTRO, WANT TO SELL MRR AT SHOWS, OR JUST WANT TO GET A CHEAPER POSTAL RATE BY BUYING WHOLESALE, EMAIL DISTRO@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL.COM FOR MORE DETAILS! GET IN TOUCH WITH ACTIVE DISTRIBUTION FOR WHOLESALE IN EUROPE!!!!

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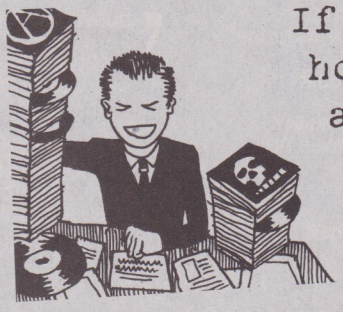

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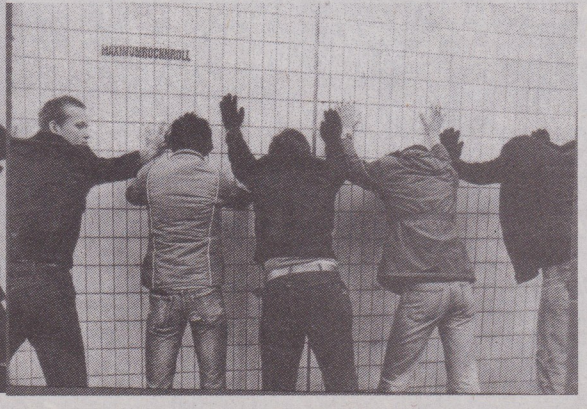


LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear *MRR*,

I was 16 the first time Ludichrist played CBGB's, back in 1985. My review of their set said: "I liked them, but most of my friends didn't." The next flyer for their demo included a bunch of quotes, including mine, which was attributed to "God." That still makes me smile, almost 30 years later.

Along those lines, I only wish No Mistake was still around so we could use Dan Goetz's "neither powerful nor interesting" line [from his review of our split with Back Off!! in *MRR* #378] on a flyer. That would've been awesome.

But really? Nothing even a *little* interesting? There's a song about my friend who's been in jail for 25 years and will never get out; a song about how great fanzines are; a song urging gays and lesbians to come out of the closet; an SSD cover; and a song about religious BS—and each song has a few lines to clarify its meaning, in addition to the lyrics. *None* of that is interesting? How about the graphics and essay promoting wildlife conservation? Also not interesting? Really?

The *only* song he mentions is "Unibrower," which is the most stupid, over-the-top obvious joke song ever. Between the moronic lyrics and the music stopping to emphasize "What the fuck?" and "Unibrower," it was a song I never imagined anyone would ever take seriously.

Just for the record (no pun intended), here are the lyrics:

Only have one, should have two,
How the fuck am I supposed to trust you?
Unibrower
What the fuck?
They don't sell tweezers where you live?
Get your girlfriend to fucking help you.
Unibrower
What the fuck?
U…ni…browerrrrrrr
Fuck off!

If you somehow think this dumb 30 seconds is a "real" song to get offended over, you probably mean well but are misguided. Go point your punky anger in a more worthy direction.

Listen at nomistake.bandcamp.com.

All the best,
—Mike Bullshit

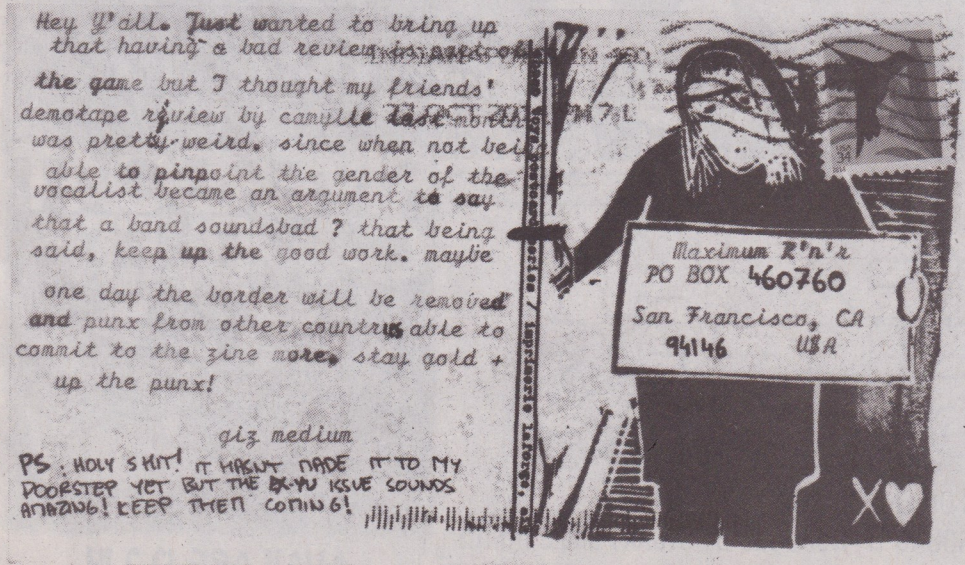
PS: I do still love *MRR* and appreciate all the hard work you guys do. Please don't think I don't. And I appreciate the nice GO! Demo 7" EP review in the same issue. Good or bad, at least he got it.

Mike,

That line refers to my opinion of the music. I agree with (and am sympathetic to) much of what your vocalist sings about, particularly your friend serving a life sentence, but lyrics on topics I agree with don't boost the merits of what I consider to be a musically unmemorable side of a split.

As for "Unibrower," it seemed like a strange and esoteric topic to joke about—part of humor is choosing subject matter with which people are familiar—so I wasn't completely sure. Plus, for some reason, the part about one's girlfriend doing the tweezing made me think of those "make me a sandwich" jokes, but that's just me. I stand corrected, but does this really happen? Maybe I'm missing something.

—Dan



This call for contributions to Eff'd Up #2, *a zine about alcoholism and recovery, landed in our mailbox. The deadline is December 7th, so get a move on, punk!*

I'm making an *Eff'd Up* #2 which will be compiled mostly of submissions from friends. I want to put something together that is positive, honest, supportive, and keeps the necessary conversations going so we can continue to help each other stay safe, healthy, informed, and aware, and shit. By & for the people I love (and whoever else wants to read). Much like the first one, I would like it to focus mainly on (but not limited to) alcoholism and addiction.

Some ideas to help get the wheels turning: mental health, personal experience, feminism, support and friendship, community, empowerment, freedom or the lack thereof, abuse and survival, gender, combatting homophobia/misogyny/racism/discrimination of any kind, *all* the bullshit, finding peace within yourself and others, feeling your feelings, good advice, bad advice, family, little known facts, secret recipes…

You may submit in any format: story, poem, list, interview, drawing, comic, whatever! It can be anonymous or not, just let me know. Send your submissions to Robin at: 198 Cornelia St #3, Brooklyn, NY 11221 USA or via email to robin@riseup.net.

We strive to be accurate in all of our content over here at MRR, *but sometimes we make mistakes. Apologies to Ramona Deepthroat, whose label Nightrider (not Night Rider, as we mistakenly spelled it!) released the excellent Pig DNA 7" and to D.C.'s Protester, whose website was inadvertently incorrect. You can stream their records at protester.bandcamp.com. Send all corrections to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.*

DEAD TANK

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Trophy Wife "All The Sides" Tape
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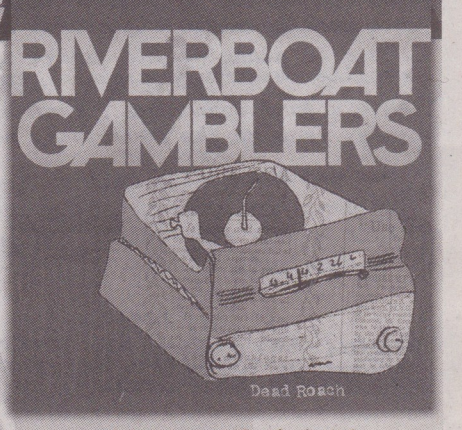

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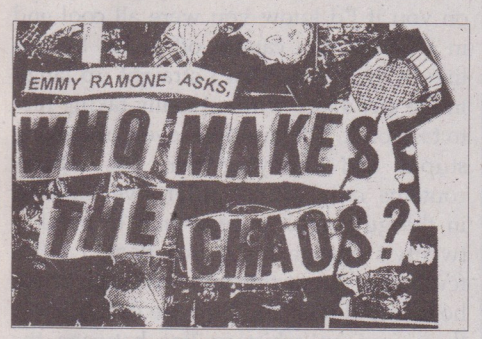


ARE WE DEAD YET?

I've spent the past few weeks working a disgusting amount, slipping into the hopeless void of shitty retail job hell. As I write this column I am filling out the liberating feeling of my final two weeks of rewards cards and saying "My pleasure" at Staples. As I start to become a full time medical test subject, I look at my past jobs, relationships with co-workers, and small talk I try to make up to supplement explaining my daily life. Today at work twelve people used the self-serve copier and only two of them put their originals on the side of the glass with the large arrows on it. How many times a day can you instruct someone to move their piece of paper to the side that reads "Place Originals Here" before you find an aching pain in your stomach? Somewhere between feeling like a fucking asshole for explaining picture instructions to adults all day and feeling your hope slip into the grim pit you dug for society in high school, it can be so hard and confusing to muster up the courage to come and just live in this world. But I think I have officially hit a wall where existing in this world as a snotty costumer service worker, with a boss who openly (and formally) thinks I smell horrific, and eats their lunch in their car blaring bad radio rap (106.7 *not* 107.5) just doesn't cut it anymore. It's just fucking stupid. If we want to truly find ourselves as outcasts or different, we have to work to become more than the surly worker they try to cast in movies and shit.

You often hear people say things such as "Punk and hardcore is my way out! Keeps me different from every schmo waking up to Folgers!" I honestly find that idea rather anachronistic or even lazy. We live in a society where all culture has become different and shocking in some way, and all punks drink coffee like they're moving up to middle management. Individuality has become a bland idea, that's okay. We have to accept that tools exist to dress our lives up in any way we want. You can separate yourself from others with a facebook post or the kind of jokes you laugh at. Whether it's the bunches of kids who go see PERFECT PUSSY and RADIATOR HOSPITAL once a month and act like going to shows, the scene, is their lives, or if it's kids who get on Xbox Live and call preteens the most obscurely vulgar terms they can muster, it's all just some bland escape from the exhausting world we all wake up in every morning. To act like punk is some sort of fresh, raw, necessary escape in 2014 is, like I previously stated, anachronistic. And thinking the rest of society doesn't fucking hate everyone else is just ignorant. We need to find a way to take the anger and angst the system has laid on us and feed it in a way that doesn't fit into the sitcom-esque agenda to keep the systems cogs turning. A life as "the person your coworker knows with a Mohawk" or "the most nihilistic upset person alive" just doesn't cut it anymore. At least not for me.

I want to find that feeling I get deep inside of me listening to SIEGE in the middle of OSU football traffic and dissect it as something more than rage, something more productive and more interesting, or at the very least form a rage in such a way that is more interesting and productive. I'm glad that all things in my life circle back to hardcore punk music and I spend a lot of my time thinking about why that is and how that is. I have decided it is time. I can make a convincing argument that hardcore punk is something more than a way to give a subconscious middle finger to stiffs and grind my brain into after a long day at work. I owe it to punk and I owe it to myself.

As all things in life lead back to hardcore punk, I have decided to spend this column assessing bands, bands that have been churning my stomach a little bit more than usual. Maybe I'll figure out some big decorative reason why, or maybe I'll say it's got that USHC sound.

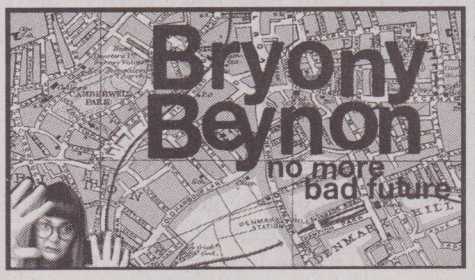
First up is OKC wackos AMERICAN HATE. I honestly couldn't touch this band's demo with a ten foot stick when it came out, but their set at the Not Normal showcase was the kind of set that took your heat exhaustion and stirred it up real nasty. What a show that was. I obviously drank way too much soda and zero water and left my brain at the door. Now we got a 7" from AMERICAN HATE in their *Dead Squeeze* EP and goddamn is it something to feel ugly over. Not Normal says in the description it is UNITED MUTATION meets MECHT MENSCH which is about the best description you could get of anything. I think it's rather far off, though. Live I can totally see MECHT MENSCH, but on this recording only really MECHT MENSCH's fast parts are shown. As far as the UNITED MUTATION reference... while it winds and squeals the same, the vocals are way too far off and this shit is just fuckin' fast all the way through. The vocals are executed fast and as whiney and snotty as possible without trying to sound like Darby Crash or nothin'. They make me feel fucking anxious. They are in the mix in a way that kinda pesters you and makes you feel gross. It's like a friend who just annoys the fuck out of you but you know if you don't pay attention to them or ignore them something bad is gonna happen. It's just a feeling you downright don't like. The guitar has lots of psych influence that makes you feel dizzy and confused, but it ain't all phasers and wah pedals. The whole record is full, start to finish, with fast driving hardcore punk riffs. The bells and whistles are thrown in tastefully in a way that really takes the standard rage and power behind hardcore punk and makes it feel unnatural and weird. I love it. I really enjoy punk music today working to distort in a way that isn't just raw power (as much as I love raw distorting punk) and I think AMERICAN HATE is doing it a lot better than most. They are a band with clear

influences outside of punk and inside of punk that is trying very hard to sound like none of them. Fucking A+. Best song is "Mr. DNA"—it's a DEVO cover, duh.

Next up is New York's NANDAS. This shit is pretty standard current 1-2 punk from time to time but often nicely ventures down a slow and windy path. Hard as rocks SIEGE-style bass riffs coupled with very standard punk, nervous shake style rhythm. I definitely haven't enjoyed a band so "moshable" in a while. But what I really enjoy about this band is that they have chosen to take this sound of "nervous rage" and not toughen it up with short, violent songs or barking, reverbed vocals. They elongate their songs to almost annoying lengths and then have vocals made up of windy, annoying splats. I picture this band getting a lot of "That was sick but the singer was fucking annoying" reviews by the lackluster populous of hardcore punk. This band is really banging and manages to take such straightforward bursts and leaves you dizzy and excited all in a rather arduous fashion. I'm gonna go out on a limb and say this band is NEOS meets UNITED MUTATION. That sick.

Lastly we have new Columbus young guns NUCLEAR MOMS, a band that simply appeared out of nowhere, made up of kids who seem pretty new to the DIY hardcore punk spectrum and are very stoked about it all. Best part of it is they are fucking sick as hell! My friend reported to me that they are really into film and made a music video for some contest, won, and made two grand! They bought amps and drums with the money so they could play shows. Fucking awesome shit. Anyway, NUCLEAR MOMS is a bass and drum combo with a wildhead singer. I think the riffs they write are way more interesting than a lot of bass and drum combos—it's rather on the high end with fast, driving riffs as opposed to slower, heavier ones. It even solos tossed in. Being a bass guitar it remains obviously heavy but it is very far off from anything you guys with beards like. The whole thing is very dark and the hints of reverb give it an aggressiveness that seems to be almost coming out on you specifically. This tape definitely has that uncomfortable aggression to it that is incredibly overdone in this day and age, yet executed in way that looks simply blank-faced at YOUTH ATTACK influences. I think this tape is something special. Every time you think you've got this band figured out there is some weird riff to throw you back into confusion. Real stoked to watch this band shred into the obscurity that is being a punk band in a town with a beef jerky outlet.

That's all I have for you mofos this month. I got two new issues of *Cretins of Distortion* out: Number Four has brief, New Blood style interviews with the WRONG, LAFFING GAS, and FOREIGN LAWNS, $3 ppd and Number Five, which is a split with *Kill Your Parents Garden*. I discuss 31 classic Indiana and Illinois bands and Macklin talks with OKC punks about pun, $3 ppd. I also just put out the first issue of *Who Makes the Chaos? Punk Fanzine* that is a collection of *MRR* writings I have done. That is *trade only*! Write me at emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com or 2656 Dayton Ave., Columbus, OH, 43202, USA. Thanks for listening punk, now go delete your paypal account!!



"As long as the music is loud enough, we won't hear the world falling apart"
— Borgia Ginz, Derek Jarman's Jubilee *(1978)*

Static Shock Weekend happened last week, a very British take on the established model of city-based punk festival that surpassed all expectations and was an immensely good time. I shot silly string out of my mouth during Dawn of Humans, got fully transcendental during Rakta, realized that Diät sound like U2 now and that I'm kind of into it, and moshed so hard to Frau that I fell over. Of course, no day outside of the house would be complete without some unwanted attention from some unfathomable bozo, and I say that in full knowledge that it makes me sound like I have a hugely high opinion of myself. I am so tired and bored with talking about this shit that I don't want to dedicate too much in the way of column inches to something that was nothing to do with the spirit of the event itself, but the nature of the medieval bullshit so many of us had to put up with colored my memory of the gigs and bears repeating for anyone who thinks we seek this shit out to be "offended."

I have been inside the venue for fifteen minutes setting up merch and catching up with out-of-towners when a voice I don't recognize says, with a suggestive overtone, "I like your tattoos." This is not uncommon patter but marginally less likely to happen to me, at a gig where a lot of women have tattoos. I ignore it just as I would do on the street, but then the voice is closer, in my ear nearly, he's moved nearer to say, "Yeah, that was me, I like your tattoos." I stare straight ahead and say "Thank. You." In an expressionless manner.

I forget about this encounter completely over the course of the next hour, Good Throb plays our set and it goes pretty well. I get a post-set water and the bartender says to me, "I just wanna say sorry. I never would have tried that cheap chat-up line on you if I'd know you were all cool and in a band." I'm caught off guard by this line to the degree that I straight up laugh in the guy's face without really taking him to task on it. The multiple levels of fucking stupid and annoying that this remark contains only hit me after I've laughed in the guys face and got him to break a twenty's change for merch float. I tell a few mates about this and we laugh about how stupid it is, and how we didn't know there was an arbitrary line between the type of tack used on you know, "regular" girls (??) and women in bands. Over the course of that evening, if I look across the room at any point, this guy will usually be looking back at me (there are more than 200 people in attendance) and I notice him collecting glasses in just the spots where he apparently needs to touch me to get past more than once. Each of these encounters is laden with the irony that one of my jobs right now is that borough councils pay me to deliver training to people who work in and manage pubs and bars about how to deal with and prevent harassment and sexual assault. Reticence to revert to my day job, plus alcohol and the pursuit of a good time all prevent me from engaging with this guy any further than I need to.

The gig is a riot, S.H.I.T play a blinding set and get the kind of reaction I haven't seen in London in a long, long time. The following night, there's been a matinee, where Rakta smash it for the second time of the fest, and the main gig starts early. I'm setting up merch and immediately accosted by creeping barman. Once again I manage to shake him off by averting eye contact. I always hold out for a long time before pulling the "Ihaveaboyfriend" card because that shouldn't be the only red signal these type of men will respond to. I wish I had, because within a few hours I'm crumpled in a heap, sobbing in a dark corner, totally defeated by this boring predictable bullshit, wanting to disappear.

This is how it goes down: bartending lothario gets a "venue volunteer" (read: scary, drunk, old guy hanger-on) at this venue to go up to several members of Frau while they're setting up and say to them,

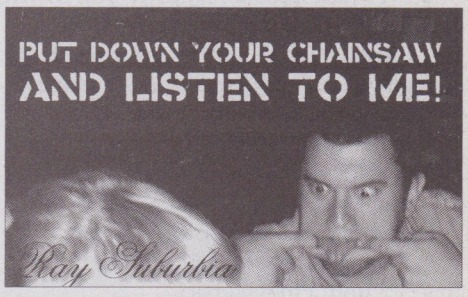
"That guy at the bar says have a great set, he thinks you're really pretty." Frau, being made of stronger women than I, duly tell this cretin to get fucked right off the bat, several people get called cunts and it's an ugly scene all round, complete with entitled outrage and a constant barrage of assertions that, "If I give you a compliment, if I say you're beautiful, you need to learn to take it." I have been taking it all night between running around looking for speaker leads, helping out on the door and selling shirts, trying to help punk happen, and this fucking bullshit is one extra thing I do not need, especially as the guys' behavior becomes more and more predatory. The tension is high and Frau play an unbelievable set that gets me right between the ribs.

Earlier that evening another member of Frau was told by the venue security that she might get raped in the women's toilets, as a hilarious "joke." Ash references this and the pre-set drama on stage with the words, "I was sexually assaulted when I was ten and I'm not fucking laughing about it." It's a moment of release in a night where only Dawn of Humans' insane pogoformance has brought me anywhere near to abandon, and I am so full of rage on my own and everyone else's behalf that I can't work out if I want to stage dive, cry, or eat my own hands. It felt good, at least, to know it wasn't just me being targeted, that there isn't a sign on my head saying, "Make me feel like shit." (I know there isn't, but I also know what it's like to feel like there is.) That is, until the final blow, where this guy gets right up in my face as I'm trying to help clear up, and says, "Sorry about that stuff with the last band, I only got that guy to go and talk to them because I thought she was you and I just think you're so pretty." At this point, mind blown by the fact that he can't tell two women apart and general nauseous with rage, I finally stop acquiescing and tell him quietly that I'm really sick of hearing these weird apologies and for him to please fuck off. I tell the manager as I'm leaving what this guy's been up to and he feigns some kind of concern, with a telling line that he's noticed him touching lots of women as he walks past them and he'll speak to him about it, that he's on his last warning.

By sheer coincidence I am due to play a show with two of my other groups the following week at the same venue. The same guy is there. This makes me want to vomit. I find out later that he shouted, "Just paying you a compliment!" at Ash as she tried to come in to the gig. There is no rest or reprieve because even if a dickhead like this learns to do that shit on his own time and not at work, he will still believe it is our responsibility to take unwanted appraisal as a "compliment," gracefully. I vent about all this on the internet and a barrage of women tell me this guy was telling them to smile every time they bought a drink, and someone else comments under it saying that a member of one of the other bands groped them in a taxi after the show. No, there is no rest or reprieve because if we go public we are gossips or witch-hunting harpies, and if we stay quiet then "how can anyone help if you won't name and shame." I know that we are sad and tired and I know that often the pressure to respond correctly from people who think they know best is a burden as heavy as the one that has to deal with this shit in the first place. Two sides of the same coin.

I'm musing on all this dejectedly when,, the following day the opportunity to meet a friend, Jenn, who is in town to write the 33 1/3 book on the first Raincoats LP, rears its head. It's a cold, slightly damp day and I've not taken a Saturday off working in a while. The whole afternoon is a blur of extreme radiant joy and I am only just coming down. Suffice to say we end up in a car hurtling across London taking in landmarks with Ana da Silva and Shirley O'Loughlin in the front seats, we sit for hours poring over their archive, box files, notebooks taken on the UK tour with Kleenex, tea and wine and new easy instant bonds with women older than my mother. The warm mirror of my rage, finding its natural ancestors from diary entries from 1977, arch letters responding to male reviews that flooded the letters pages. Tales of rage from behind the desk at Rough Trade, where labels called and wanted to speak to the men only, tales of solidarity and sisterhood and the deep abiding bonds that stay even after band members have taken twists and turns in life that are unavoidable in a 35-year history. There is Portuguese wine and deep truths and the private, highly specific pain of historical misrepresentation on bookshelves when difficult life moments find their way, transmogrified into some easy grand narrative that doesn't for a second reflect messy punk reality, bound books, Jon Savage, you scoundrel. We talk about the erasure of everyday violence towards women and girls from so many punk narratives, so often written by men, and I'm reminded that, even in the midst of my teary frustration, as I struggle to deal with misogyny in my own world, these women fought to walk down the street and not be attacked, fought to create a girl punk reality to the degree that a lack of sexist heckles at a show was a noteworthy experience, not the inverse. They fought to even get up on stage, even hold a guitar, and maybe things haven't changed too much, but I would not be here without them. I would not be heard without them. A revelatory evening.

That night I get in late and drunk-watch Derek Jarman's *Jubilee* for the first time. I think about Toyah careering through space time, chubby girl punk heroines with murderous libidos, tenderness in barren rooms, aesthetic chaos, everything intentional, shot in a version of London's Docklands not yet marred with the shiny violence of global finance, still deep in post-war grime, perfect chaos of a lost Squatland, death and fucking, bizarre beauty and inchoate rage. Lost possibilities, or just yet to be found again.



"Chicago is an October sort of city, even in spring."
—Nelson Algren

Moving back to Chicago was surprising even to me. When I moved away from here in 2002 I had no intentions of ever moving back. But when I got unjustly fired from my job in Oakland and got a fat severance pay (read: payoff) within a month I found myself with my good friend Kevin in Logan Square at Cole's Bar watching the Puterbaugh Sisters lay waste to a tiny back room performance space. I'm writing this in my bedroom of my dream house, where I live with two other people and pay less than half of what I did to live in the back of a record store in the Mission with five other people. I got a steady job within a week, working for, and with, the punx. My cat, Hortense, has two stories to run around in, her own back sunporch to lounge on, and a coop full of chickens to fuck with in the backyard. So I've gotta say, I'm truly surprised how well this rash decision played out and how stoked I am to be back.

A year in the Bay was more than enough for me. That place is completely out to lunch—sometimes in a good way, but more often in a "you gotta be joking..." sort of way. A friend once said to me, "It's like there are only two places in the world

to you—the Midwest and the internet." Yeah. Pretty much. I loved living in the Bay—the energy, the weather, the inherent outsider feeling of living on the literal edge of America. But I missed a lot of the small things that are so very Midwestern. Politics steeped less out of punk (or other sub-cultures) and more out of history and labor. Humor that can be for the sake of humor, and not overwrought with political implication. Where concerning yourself about others is not necessarily political and never narcissistic—only if it's comically, obviously so. Yeah, yeah, I know I'm painting with very broad strokes here. But that's kind of the point.

I just love the aspect that in Illinois you treat strangers like they're your friends, and you treat your friends like they're assholes. Bob Newhart probably put it best when he said, "I think that what comes through in Chicago humor is the affection. Even though you're poking fun at someone or something, there's still an affection for it." Why make fun of something you don't like? Why waste your time at all on something you don't like? And I like the Bay, a lot—I left my heart in a flower that I hated. But I never realized how much I genuinely loved this city until I moved back.

There's something to be said about familiarity. The world's a fucking game, and every place has its own set of rules. I get the rules of this city and this state. I get the social nuances and proprieties. I don't get the rules that result from living in the shadows of hippies that stretch from San Francisco to Berkeley. I can't even count the amount of times my big mouth and, let's call it...acerbic, way of speaking got me into trouble in the Bay. The culture shock I had coming from living off of I-94/I-57 for 31 years to San Francisco was incredibly jarring. And after a year of living out there I realized that it's a great place to visit, but living there is a whole other beast that I can't see myself ever taming. I've never felt so much like a child being reprimanded in school in my life when having some conversations with people—not even as a child in school. There's a strange feeling of political absolutism that sometimes verges too close to bigotry and fascism for my tastes, especially with Bay Area radicals. And I swear I might explode if anyone ever calls me "ableist" for referring to something as lame ever again.

No seriously. Does anyone *actually* use the word lame these days to mean anything other than lame? I can't recall a single time in my life where someone called me up and said "I can't make it to band practice. I had an accident and my arm is lame." Or, "I cannot fucking believe they didn't have a ramp at that place. My lame grandmother couldn't get in." Let me just preemptively give my sincerest apologies to any Dickensian street-urchins I may offend by use of that word. I hope that the next sooted back-alley chirurgeon you render services from does a better job with the bloodletting next go around and that the calomel actually takes.

But beyond the minor personal peeves that I often chose to turn into full-blown neuroses, my experiences in the Bay did give me a lot of positive things to take away. The collective spirit of the punks out there (when not squandering it micro-managing each others' politics, language and personal style) *really* impressed me. Considering the density of the small cities surrounding the Bay and the *insane* constantly rising rent, people simply *have* to work together in a way that I never experienced before. When you have to live six deep in a house in order to afford things like food and life, you really get a sense of camaraderie with like-minded individuals. Thoughts birthed at the bottom of a beer at the end of the bar get brought up again and again. For better or worse there's always going to be someone who is 100% into helping out with the harebrained idea you had about how to save punk, or whatever.

I left Chicago in 2002 for a variety of reasons, one of which was that I felt that the punk scene at the time was way too scattered and disconnected. South Side punks hating on North Side punks. North Side punks completely ignoring South Side punks. Everyone hating on punks from the suburbs. Everyone being flat-out afraid of the West Side. I often felt uncomfortable as one of the (if not *the*) only POC at some shows, or one of the only suburban POC kids at a show of primarily POC kids from the city proper. Punk politics were very much in the vein of the general order of old school Chicago politics—neighborhood to neighborhood.

It honestly felt like the whole Thrill Jockey post-rock, weird indie post-hardcore scene that was coming to a head in the late '90s/early '00s was at least more open to anyone than punk was. Chicago punk was all a little too "real cool club and you're not a part of it" for me. Also, the Traitors broke up. And they were the best.

But in the past few years Chicago seems to have gotten *really* amazing. The people working so hard to do the annual Black and Brown Punk Fest, the amazing job everyone did at Clitfest last year, the ceaseless and thankless work still going on with everyone involved in the Pure Joy all-ages venue project. It seems that when the Fireside Bowl closed (it's *not* the same anymore) in 2004 a huge hole opened in a good many scenes in the city. And as much as I miss being able to catch a band like Assuck playing an all-ages afternoon matinee at a bowling alley, or weird-ass bills of thrown together touring bands like the Nobodys and Anti-Flag (*that* one went well...) the Fireside closing made people have to stop relying on the old and make something brand new. Not that Chicago was only the Fireside Bowl, but I'll go ahead and say that for a long while Chicago punk was *mostly* the Fireside Bowl—at least in the corners of punk I lurked in at the time. But these past ten years without a region-wide centralized hub have created a couple punk generations that have done some really amazing things in their own neighborhoods and communities.

I saw Shaved Women whip a loft full of punks into a frenzied stomp at Club Rectum. The directions Johnny B. gave me to the show were a street address and then "go around back in the alleyway and up the stairs." I went with my buddy Jimmy, a mid-30s Chicagoland punk vet who lives in that neighborhood and he was like, "Where the hell are we going?!" To a non-bar punk show, dude. Yes, they still exist in Chicago. And yes, we did stand in the back the room like the weird older punk dudes that no one seems to know are often wont to do while the kids up front dance hard. And we had a fucking blast.

So while it looks like this city is still heavily a 21+ one, there seems to be a very concerted effort to work on more inclusive and all-ages spaces. I love that the strict old school Chicago style neighborhoodism that used to stratify the punks here is dissolving. I'd rather people be divided along political lines than transit lines, that's for sure. People are trying new things and there's less "this is a hardcore show" and "this is a pop punk show" type of mentality happening—which is really, really refreshing.

Like the Bay, Chicago is going through some changes via gentrification. Many of the neighborhoods that have been primarily Latino over the past 40 years are becoming whiter, richer, and more suburban. I've been genuinely shocked to find out where some of my white friends are staying these days. Living on blocks that used to be run by the gangs. Blocks that, as a light-skinned euro-looking Latino, I knew I would have... problems...passing through. Then they tell me how much they're paying to live there and my jaw really hits the floor. But at least in Chicago there's *a lot* more space than the Bay. Not to mention Chicago's rather, let's

say, *colorful* histories of ever shifting ethnic neighborhoods to give some examples of how all this may play out. Not that any of that makes it any better, but this city doesn't feel like it's completely ripping itself apart like San Francisco sometimes does.

But all politics (punk and otherwise) aside, I'm living in the same city as my family again for the first time in twelve years, and that's always a nice thing. I miss having the proper Cuban/Colombian/Japanese holiday family meal. Most of my dad's family has been in the same neighborhood for decades and I'm genuinely excited to go help Abuelo Jaime and Abuela Elvia go grocery shopping. She never bothered learning English or how to drive ("¿Porque? Yo vivo en Chicago.") and he's now blind. I can pretend to give a fuck about the Bears game with my cousins and just hang out and talk mad shit and eat mad wings.

Being that I've pretty much been broke since last October and am now focusing on getting Autonomy back in full gear as a touring band, and getting *No Friends* zine off the ground, it's also nice to live in a city where a shitty frozen Tombstone pizza doesn't cost a wallet cleansing eight dollars and where riding the train costs the same amount of money no matter which stop you get off at.

This is the city of Studs Terkel's common humanity and Nelson Algren's celebration of the ugly. Heat indexes and wind chills. White Castle and proper pizza. The haunting specter that is Da Machine. Where you say what you mean, mean what you say, and have to be willing to back it the fuck up. Politics are fucked and bullshit is everywhere, but Studs put it best when he told Dick Cavett, "Chicago is not the most corrupt city, it's the most theatrically corrupt." And I love a good show. Especially a free one.

All my favorite bands and zines seem to be coming out of the Midwest or Spain right now. And seeing that I'm not ready to head back to Madrid just yet, or spend the time to learn Euskara or Catalan, I might as well be in a city that's centralized to where all the local action is. I've got my boots and my leather and I'm ready for winter. Now, can someone pass me an Old Style?

ENDNOTES:

1) It's been twelve years since I've lived here. It might as well be a completely different city. If anyone has got any hot tips on places/things I should check out, shoot 'em my way. In exchange I can give you a tour of where all the cool things used to be, but no longer are. stayinchicago@hotmail.com

2) I've been hearing some promising news about Pure Joy. If you're interested in helping support a legit non-profit, new all-ages space in Chicago check 'em out on Facebook at purejoychicago.

3) *No Friends* zine is still in the works. The initial release date of January has to be pushed back because as a welcome home gift my landlord raised our rent by 50%, so I'm working on finding a new place. I'm still looking for contributors, photographers, writers, interviewers/interviews. If it's weird, I want it! In the meantime, I've been working hard on soliciting, editing and transcribing interviews. It's gonna be a doozy. nofriendszine@gmail.com

4) If you ever find yourself in dire need of medical help near Elko, Nevada may I recommend their Urgent Care facility? They love Tom of Finland shirts and making things a bit easier when it comes to payment, * wink wink *.

5) Thanks to everyone who has written to me over the months about the bullshit I spout off in this column. It's really nice to know that I'm not just yelling at clouds.

6) Who wants to start a band/needs someone to fill a spot in their band? I've got more time than money, but I've got even more personal shit I need to work out through music.

Last month's column was about picking up a guitar or a bass and what you should check on the neck of an instrument before making it yours. This time around, it's all about what is on the body.

Body type

It's a jungle out there. The body is made from one, up to multiple pieces of wood. The more wood there is, the less it costs—hollow body guitars are more expensive. It is most important to choose a shape and a weight that you are comfortable with.

Pick-ups

Way back, when Les Paul invented one of the first solid body guitars ever, he took a log, glued a neck onto it, screwed on one pick-up, and put on some strings—and that was it. That story tells us that the most important things on an electric guitar are the pick-ups. What exactly is a pick-up, you might ask? Well, my friends, it is close to a microphone, but designed to turn the movement of a metal string into a current, which is later amplified by—you might know it by now!—an amplifier.

A pick-up is actually a very simple design, usually made out of a copper coil bobbin wrapped around magnets. If you read one of my previous columns you might know that there are three types of pick-ups: single-coils, humbuckers, and active pick-ups. I'll dedicate an entire column to that topic later. But if there is one single thing you might keep from these lines, my friends, it's that all in all, when you get a guitar stock from the manufacturer, it usually has terrible pick-ups. Guitar manufacturers, most of the times (but not always), save money by putting cheap pick-ups on their instruments. So if you're about to upgrade your instrument, look no further, and replace the original pick-ups. It's a very simple soldering job that you can do on your own.

Pick-up Selector

Basically, this is just a switch that allows you to flip between one, two, or three pick-ups, and use all of them at the same time. Thus you get a mixture of different sound flavors. Whatever you might find, either written "Rhythm/Treble," like a Les Paul, or with nothing written at all, like a Stratocaster, it only controls which pick-up you're using.

Volume and Tone Controls

Volume is just a simple potentiometer or "pot" *(Ed. Note: See the glossary at the end!)* put between the pick-up and the output jack. When you turn the pot down, the strength of the pick-up signal is shorted to the ground, thus you have less volume. The tone control is another pot, linked to the volume control, with a capacitor soldered to it, making it a high pass filter. A high pass filter allows the high/treble frequencies to go to the ground, while resisting the low/bass frequencies. When you turn down the tone control, you're just sending the high frequencies to the ground. Consider the "ground" as the place where a signal is sent to die.

Bridge and Saddles

On a guitar, a string is attached at two points: on the neck, where they are rolled around the tuning machines, and on the body, where they are attached by the ball-end of the string to a bridge.

You have basically two options: fixed

bridge (Les Paul type) or floating bridge (Stratocaster type). The first one is easy and simple, it doesn't move, so you don't run into any trouble with it. Either the strings are going through the body (see a Telecaster), or are just fixed on a piece of metal (called a stop tail bridge, typically a Les Paul).

You'll get in the trouble zone when it comes to floating bridges. These things were created in order to move the bridge up and down, so you can have a higher or lower pitch on the note you're playing. To be honest, this thing is a mess, because the vintage system, that the guys at Fender invented, is imperfect. Every time you play with a floating bridge, your guitar will end-up out of tune. This is the reason why someone invented the Floyd Rose locking system. You can push and pull the bridge, and it will easily get back in place, but it requires a lot of fine tuning, so it's not really designed for beginners.

Pickguard

Initially created to protect the wood of your guitar from the assault of heavy strumming, this piece of plastic can be small, like a Les Paul, or big, like a Stratocaster. Honestly, this thing doesn't really matter when you're about to buy a guitar, but at least, you know what to call that plastic plate.

Output Jack

Once again, this is simply a female jack where you plug in your instrument cable. Usually, the cheaper the guitar is, the cheaper the input jack is. Some guitars have more than one input jack, but that's only designed for a stereo effect.

That's it for now. Go out, pick a guitar or a bass and start playing your own music. Get in touch at instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com.

Lexicon:

Potentiometer: *A potentiometer or a pot, is a three-terminal resistor with a sliding or rotating contact that forms an adjustable voltage divider.*

Stoptail bridge: *A stoptail bridge (sometimes also called a stopbar bridge) used on a solid body electric guitar or archtop guitar is a specialized kind of fixed hard-tail bridge. Hard-tail bridged guitars use different bridges from those guitars fitted with vibrato systems (which are also known as tremolo arms or whammy bars).*

Saddle: *The saddle of a guitar refers to the part of the bridge that physically supports the strings. It may be one piece (typically on acoustic guitars) or separate pieces, one for each string (electric guitars and basses). The saddle's basic purpose is to provide the end point for the string's vibration at the correct location for proper intonation, and on acoustic guitars to transfer the vibrations through the bridge into the top wood of the guitar. Saddles are typically made of plastic or bone for acoustic guitars. Electric guitar saddles are typically metal, though some synthetic saddles are available.*

You know *Maximum*, I had been writing this column for like a year and a half before I put together the fact that writing a column which often is about music, in a music magazine, sort of made me a Music Journalist. Which sucks. Music Journalists are the worst.

It's mostly funny because I'm so unqualified to be a Music Journalist. I sort of don't know shit about music. I mean, I know what I like—D-beats, blastbeats, shrieking and sludge—and I know that all my opinions about what rules and what sucks are right. But like, I grew up in the nineties. When I was a kid I listened to Epitaph whoa-whoa pop punk. It's not really my thing anymore but that's my baseline and as I've gotten older I've gotten more into stuff like Oathbreaker, and less into, like, the Germs.

Or any of the other bands in *The Decline of Western Civilization*.

Do you know this movie? It's a documentary from the early eighties in which the director of *Wayne's World* interviews a bunch of hardcore bands from LA that my friends in high school liked but which I could never really get into: the Germs and Black Flag and X and Fear and stuff like that. It's a "classic," which is why it's funny that a Serious Music Journalist like me had never seen it. I mean I remember reading about it and knowing it was a thing for forever, way before I was ever able to access a copy—Pennywise CDs were easy to get at the mall in the part of far west central Jersey that might as well be Pennsylvania where I grew up, but actual punk documentaries were not, and by the time I was old enough to be taking the train into New York I'd bought into the Music Journalist paradigm and started obsessing over shitty contemporary emocore bands instead of old stuff.

And it's weird—I don't think I really liked the emocore / second wave screamo / white cis boys performing anguish bands I was into at that point, either. But at least they were an excuse for boys to wear eyeliner and tight t-shirts, and I still listen to the first couple Boy Sets Fire albums sometimes. But that stuff led me to the Locust which led me to Converge, which is where I still live now—my biggest tattoo is a Converge tattoo and it is pretty big—and while this wasn't back before the internet, per se, it was definitely back when the internet still sucked, like before you could really pirate anything properly.

...Check me out, talking like my own personal history of giving a fuck about shitty bands matters. Maybe I actually *am* a Music Journalist.

Anyway, my point is just that I had a weird experience watching *The Decline of Western Civilization*. So like, I've tried, in my life, to give a fuck about most of the bands in that movie. I mean I never tried with Fear, because I heard somewhere at some point that Lee Ving was a big homophobe. (Maybe here? Maybe from George Tabb? Who maybe was saying it like it was a good thing? I don't remember.) But like, I tried to get into the Germs, and I could never really do it. A Rock Dude I knew when I was living in New Brunswick in the early oughties was super into X—the X from LA that's in that movie—and he played them for me at one point and I tried. I really did. But I was like, "This is supposed to be punk? Are you sure? This sure sounds like rock music to me." (I'm guessing they count as punk because of the Television Clause in the Punk Rock Rulebook.)

And even Black Flag has never been my thing. I mean, much like you, I was issued a Black Flag tattoo when I was younger, but they're just not really my thing...Ugh, I've written and re-written this paragraph a bunch of times, because this has been a weird week and I've been exhausted and having a hard time figuring out how to say what I'm trying to say here, which I'm telling you just so you can know that there are versions of this column that I've deleted in which I talk a bunch of shit I don't even mean about Black Flag, but that in the end the truth is just that that band just never did much for me and I don't care about them.

The Circle Jerks are in that movie too and I'm not gonna lie, I had a mixtape in high school with their cover of "I Wanna Destroy You" on it and I was pretty into that, but I can't tell if that's cool or not. Did you know Debbie Gibson did backup vocals on it? That is definitely cool. Debbie Gibson, if you're reading this, get in touch. Let's make a doom record.

My point is this: I had this realization,

while watching interviews with and performances by all these bands I'd kind of felt like an asshole most of my life for not being able to bring myself to care about, that there was actually a reason I didn't care about those bands.

It is that they're a bunch of dude bullshit!

I mean, Alice Bag is in the movie, and she is not dude bullshit.

I should have written this column right after I watched the movie, 'cause I don't remember the specifics that well, but like, I remember the interview part where X was showing off how cool they were by giving each other stick-n-pokes on camera, and then they explained about how their one song was about sexual assault, as if that were cool; and the scene where the guys in Black Flag are all hanging out bragging about how they don't make any money—although they have a publicist, I think? Or maybe that was the Germs?—and then the singer goes into his little lair and pulls out a pair of panties and is like "These are from one of my victims," because he thinks that victimizing women is funny; and obviously the Fear shit is ridiculous, they're just being straight dude assholes; and I know that Darby Crash is like a punk rock saint or something but he spends the whole interview bragging and then there's a scene where the Germs are playing and he is wasted and it is so boring that if I were at that show I would have taken up smoking again so I'd have a reason to step outside because, uh, I don't think wasted people being wasted are that compelling? And I mean, I'm no Real Music Journalist so I haven't done any research beyond watching one movie but like, if that's what Germs shows are like, and that's what the legend is based on, then in Darby Crash we've been fetishizing young men's self-destruction for like three decades, and sorry but that is just patriarchy stuff.

And here's the thing about me and smoking. Do you know how I quit smoking? I moved to New York with this girl Sarah I'd been dating when I was at, like, the most emotionally shut off and numb point in my life. I needed to come out as trans but what I did, instead, was be in a relationship and move that relationship into this apartment that we couldn't really afford and get a job at a bookstore that I couldn't pay the rent with. And she wisely broke up with me, leaving me with a lease that we couldn't afford together which I especially couldn't afford on my own, and I was like, "Well, I'm going to be broke and in a bad mood and barely leaving the apartment for the next month anyway. I guess I might as well quit smoking."

It totally worked.

I hope that never happens again! I hope I'm never that emotionally numb or that broke and shitty again. I came out as trans pretty soon after that and my life was pretty rough for a while but nowadays my life rules so fucking bad that I don't even talk about it very much, because I'd feel like I was bragging, and I hope I never have another cigarette because smoking for me is a somatic timewarp back to that era of my life and *that* is how bad I would want to leave if I was at a show where the singer was acting like Darby Crash in that movie.

Look. There are no two ways about it: bragging about what a badass you are to an interviewer is rock star bullshit. Framing being a young white male asshole as revolutionary or even interesting is rock star bullshit *and* it's patriarchy stuff. And rape jokes? Come on, dude. You don't need me to interpret rape jokes for you.

What I realized watching that movie was that, all along, those old LA hardcore bands hadn't done anything for me because they were totally by young men who were stoked to be young men, for young men who were stoked to be young men. I mean, I know that women like those bands and that Exene was even *in* X but like, look at the audiences those bands were playing to. There was always like one girl there. What I realized was that I grew up in a culture that didn't teach me to trust my guts on this stuff—I figured there was something wrong with me for not liking those bands, when actually they were just not bands for me. You know? It's cool if you're stoked on those bands but like, I just wish somebody had told me that it was okay not to give a fuck about Black Flag. But I guess I would have had to say, "I don't give a fuck about Black Flag" for somebody to have said, "Yeah, that's cool?" Instead mostly I just kind of implied that I liked all those bands because I was supposed to, so it was never even a conversation.

And I know that part of this is about time; that by the time I was getting involved in music Riot Grrrl had already happened and this critique was already a part of punk. Like by the time I started playing in bands—and I was old when I started, too—I think that framing dudes being dudes as rebellious or radical was already kind of passé. Or at least as passé as it's ever going to be under patriarchy. Or at least it was in the parts of punk I was involved in.

I'm just stoked we're not all so self-fucking-congratulatory about how punk we are now. I mean, I know this is an unfair comparison because Ragana is one of the best bands in the history of the world but I'm thinking about the difference between a Ragana show and like, that footage of that Germs show. Or any of those other bands in that movie. I just think about how Ragana does a thing where it's like, "This is a something I care about, and I want to put it out there because it might be something you care about too, or related to things you care about, and we can both have some catharsis or connection or something over it, and also here are shrieking and blastbeats." Whereas like...I don't know, man, I kept getting the feeling that in those '81 hardcore videos the bands and the people watching them are all like strutting around like "check out how badass I am."

I don't give a fuck about how badass anybody is.

ENDNOTES:

1) I don't actually have a Black Flag tattoo. I have a Black Heart Procession tattoo.

2) Thanks Colin Atrophy for saying "You don't want that. That's patriarchy stuff. You don't want that" on his radio show, Radio Harvester, which you can listen to on the radio or the internet. It's such a good phrase. "That's patriarchy stuff."

3) Uh, if you're sick of reading me write about patriarchy all the time, I want you to know I'm hella sick of writing about it too, and wish it would go away and quit wrecking everything so I could just write about Oathbreaker and Young And In The Way and the new Groke/Enormous Door split and other shit that rules. Maybe patriarchy will be over by next month's column. Hopefully!

The best band in France right now is called Zone Infinie. Chances are most people will never hear them. Their loss. Here's why.

Zone Infinie started on the ruins of Toujours Rien, a band I discovered in 2007 or 2008. They were from Saint Etienne, a smaller city close to Lyon, and one of my bands at the time—Pizza Od—shared a few bills with 'em. The very first time I saw Toujours Rien, I knew something was up—they played a gig they were not invited to, in a squat next door to their

practice space. It was pretty simple. All of the members were at the gig, so they just went on stage, plugged in, and played. No permission needed, no permission asked. That night another band, clean-cut post-punk with members dressed as dickless right-wingers, got pissed off at them for using their gear. Boo fucking hoo. Note to people who play in bands—fuck you if you don't share your gear. Fuck you if your amp is too expensive to share, fuck you if you guitar is so fancy you're scared some poor fuck is gonna ruin it, etc. No excuse. End of sidenote. Back to business.

That night, the generator blew up during their second song. No more light, no more electricity, so they had to stop. Some shit like that. But I was hooked. I saw them again, and again. There were quite a lot of moments were I told myself they were the only punk band in France—the only band made by punks, playing punk. Of course this is not true, or at least not interesting, but still. Toujours Rien, as a band and as people, were at war with the world. They got into more fights than I can count, and half of the time their gigs were really shitty-sounding and badly played. The other half were priceless. These guys were not professional musicians, they were young soldiers on a mission to destroy. I don't wanna get into personal details, you'll just have to trust me.

Musically, Toujours Rien sounded like French Punk, which means more or less like the first Camera Silens LP, or some other bands from the *Chaos En France* camp, but better, and informed by international punk as well, especially Spanish, I'd say. Melodic, angry, fighting music, the same way Eskorbuto or Ultimo Resorte were melodic, angry, fighting music. Their bass lines were catchier than herpes, and each song had at least a part—but usually the whole song—you wished you had written yourself. They sung in French, and what they sung was what they lived. You could tell this band was their life, not some fucking pose, not some NYC/Paris/Lyon hip young man talking about violence or fireworks or danger after buying some stupid G.I.S.M. shirt online. Unlike a lot of the *Chaos en France* bands, Toujours Rien didn't try to be funny—thank god for that. They just tried to talk about their life, which consisted of fighting, hanging out in the streets, having nothing to do, drinking, killing time, etc. Sharp lyrics about the void, goosebumps guaranteed for the lost children of the urban hell. They played for a couple years, maybe three or four, can't remember. They only released a demo tape. I have no idea if non-French speakers could get into it. The music's great, but it wouldn't be the same without the lyrics. Like Taulard from Grenoble, like Lexomyl and Passion Armée from Lyon, they wrote *real songs*, you know, the kind that you can drink to, sing in the shower to, fight to. Real French songs for the outcasts of today.

I remember once, some asstard I won't name "reviewed" one of their gigs on his "blog." That guy was part of what I call "the fancy side of hardcore", you know, the clean-cut record collectors and nerds, people really into their gear, their colored records, their paypal accounts, etc. Japanese punk, emocore, Orchid and Burning Spirits, that kind of shit. The guy wrote that it was one of the worst sets he'd ever seen, by one of the worst bands. He said the sound was shit, etc., and that it was the typical kind of crap that made him hate French punk. When I read that, I felt relieved he didn't get it—it was so obvious that the version of punk played and lived by Toujours Rien was as far removed as his version of punk as…I dunno, a soldier getting drunk to forget is far removed from some fucking dot-com CEO having a glass of wine during dinner with his wife and two kids. I love it, when these people don't get it. I hope they never will. I mean, I *know* they never will, but I hope they will never *pretend* they do. I could really do without these people. It's hard to find a word to describe them, but you know, the fancy ones, the people with no hate, people who always got along with their parents, people who always got along with the world. Gentle assholes and posers. People who never had to fight to survive. People who never had to beg others for a beer, never had to find their furniture on the sidewalk. People who never looked at their veins with a knife in their hand. People who think everyone's as privileged as they are. This probably doesn't make sense—my bad for not finding my words.

You can probably find the Toujours Rien demo online, if you're interested. Toward the end, they were supposed to record their new songs—some fucking anthems, if you ask me—for a 7" or 12", but it never happened, as the band imploded in the same violent, chaotic way they'd started. A few years passed. Some of the members started to hang out in Lyon more and more. They opened a squat called the Rock'n'roll Vengeance, a unique place in this city. Not a place I hung out a lot at, but a place that looked like themselves: wild, spray-painted, full of guts. A year or so ago, the singer/songwriter (who will probably laugh at me for calling him a "songwriter," but hey, *c'est la vie*) and bassist, joined by a new crew, started Zone Infinie, which basically picked up where Toujours Rien left off. Except that the songs are even better. If you're interested in French punk, this is the current band you should hear. They're supposed to record in the coming month or two, and put it out themselves as a 12". I cannot wait to hear it.

ENDNOTES:

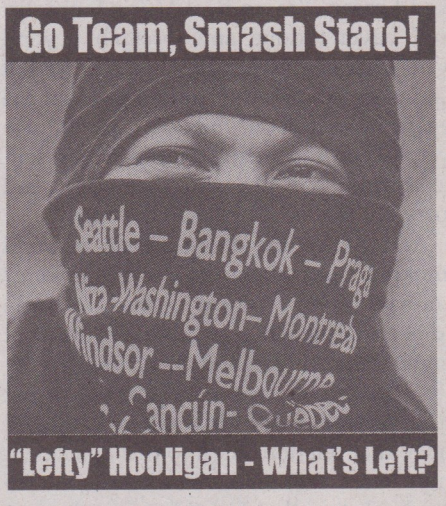
1) There is a *Terminal Boredom* printed fanzine out now. Waiting for my copy. Including "FNU Ronnies, White Load, Black Flag, Folded Shirt, Jimbo Easter, films, poetry and records." God.

2) Love the Mystic Inane 7". Took me by surprise and made me break my rule to never buy 7"s again (pain in the ass to flip, so small, so useless, etcetera). Mystic Inane sound like they tuned every string of their guitar on the same note, so whatever they do, it just sounds like a mess, which has the great effect of making you feel like something's wrong, and that something might be you, not them; they sound like bummer-punk, like anti-punk, like no-fun-for-you-and-me-punk, and I hope I get to hear more from them one of these days (not too much more, since bands with more than two records usually suck).

3) Powerviolence fans, check out Downer Buzz from New Zealand. Especially if you like the Meth Drinker sound. Same shit, but fast instead of slow.

4) Big Zit 7", obviously. Coneheads demo, too.

5) Welcome to 2015, btw.



I started listening to the radio to fall asleep at night when my parents moved back to southern California. I was a teenager in the '60s, living in Ventura, California. At first I listened to commercial AM radio; Top 40 and pop crooners. My parents' radio stations. Then I discovered the Mighty

1090, XERB, out of Tijuana with Wolfman Jack, a growling, gravely-voiced disc jockey who specialized in "race music" that was quickly transforming into rock music. He played both black rhythm and blues and the white pop versions, Elvis-inspired rockabilly, doo wop, and the beginnings of rock'n'roll way past midnight. XERB was Mexican border blaster radio powerful enough to be heard well into Canada.

Those were the days of analog radio, when you could fine tune the dial with the slightest touch to catch radio stations that were too distant, interstitial, or so weak you could only find them late at night. FM radio was in its infancy, and often so low-powered that its line-of-sight signal meant that LA stations and their broadcasts were largely confined to that smog-choked metropolis. Early FM radio in LA was news-based or education-oriented or ghettoized into specific musical niches, like classical or jazz.

KMET started transmitting in 1968 at 94.7 as one of the first "underground" FM rock music stations, freeform, and relatively commercial free. Known as The Mighty Met, I only got its signal after 10 or so in the evening, when atmospheric conditions allowed it to bounce off the ionosphere and reach beyond the LA basin. Rock'n'roll was the soundtrack to my involvement with the New Left and hippie counterculture, and KMET allowed me to discover music that never got any airplay, commercial or otherwise. I remember the hair standing up on the back of my neck when I first heard the intro storm-and-bells to Black Sabbath's first album in 1970, which was then played over the air in full. And then there was the utter wackiness of the Dr. Demento show.

The wide open free-wheeling nature of FM radio rapidly evaporated during the '70s. Commercial advertising was less prominent on the FM airwaves, corporate sponsorship of FM stations and networks was more low key, and the listener/community supported model of Pacifica and NPR was going strong. But true underground radio was essentially dead by 1975. Eventually, FM radio became more popular and commercial than AM radio, marginalizing the AM band to talk radio, news and sports broadcasting, and religious and ethnic programming. So let's turn to one of the metaphors generated by the FM radio experience. When Pacifica-affiliated KPFA (94.1) in Berkeley or NPR-associated KQED (88.5) in San Francisco conduct pledge drives, they often allude to the fact that their call numbers are on the left-hand side of the radio dial, implying that they are politically to the left as well. This coincidence also holds for music, with both KMET and the original KSAN (94.9) in San Francisco, not to mention the many Bay Area college radio stations, residing to the left of the dial. I'm told that this is a happenstance of FCC allocation, nothing more. And I'm not interested in making the left-right nature of the radio dial into an analogy for some overly simplistic left-right political spectrum in this country. Instead, consider that the 88-108 MHz portion of the FM radio spectrum represents the full range of political discussion and debate in the United States. My subject this column is how different forces in our society fight over dialing politics either more to the right or further to the left.

FDR's New Deal was at the center of the dial at the end of the second World War, but working people in this country had dialed politics significantly to the left by 1945, after over fifteen years of grueling class struggle waged in the midst of economic depression and then world war. Fascism had been soundly defeated and the Soviet Union was widely praised, some 35% of the American working class was unionized and more were organizing, industrial actions and nation-wide strikes were regular occurrences, and talk of socialism and calls for revolution were commonplace. The capitalist ruling class was in fear for its power and position, so a concerted effort was launched by the *bourgeoisie* to dial things back to the right. The Truman administration initiated a concerted anti-Soviet, anti-communist campaign that climaxed with McCarthyism's purges during the Eisenhower era. The results were a 1950s marked by conformity and conservatism, Cold War and capitalist consumerism, as political discussion and debate shifted markedly to the right.

The decade from 1965 to 1975, known as the 60s, witnessed a political and cultural explosion that reset the dial to the left once again. The Civil Rights movement, the New Left, and the counterculture led, while JFK's liberalism and LBJ's Great Society followed. However, with the demise of Nixon, America's last liberal president, the capitalist ruling class regained the ascendency. For the past forty-odd years it's been dialing things back to the right, dismantling the welfare state, exploiting the collapse of Soviet communism, and deconstructing liberalism into neo-liberalism. The so-called Reagan revolution went so far as to threaten to demolish the New Deal altogether. When it comes to the Democrats, Carter dialed it to the right of JFK/LBJ, Clinton dialed it to the right of Carter, and Obama dialed it to the right of Clinton. That's where we're at today, the 2014 election hiccup notwithstanding.

Now, personally, I think that American politics lurched a little too far to the right in 2014, and that moderation will prevail once more in 2016. But it's important to realize that this supposed moderation is actually solidly right wing when compared to the '60s, let alone the '40s. The political discussion and debate in this country has shifted, and continues to shift, to the right, thanks to the power and influence of the *bourgeoisie*. Returning to the radio analogy, where we once listened to Hank Williams Sr and country western music, we're now tuned into Brad Paisley and fatuous country rock. Where we once grooved to John Coltrane and bebop, we now enjoy Winton Marsalis and vapid cool jazz. Where we once got high on Jimi Hendrix and rock'n'roll, we're now buzzed by Yngwie Malmsteen and heavy metal noodling. And where we once thrashed to Black Flag and hardcore punk, we now politely consume Green Day and vacuous pop punk musicals. A sad state of affairs, indeed.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, End Time, *from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called* Fim *in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.*

This August marked the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. Unlike the Civil War and the Second World War, which have a long life in popular culture, the First World War is remote and forgotten in America. Less so in Europe, where every town has its cenotaph with very long lists of local dead that cast a long shadow. One historian called the First World War "the catastrophe from which all other catastrophes began" and

I would be inclined to agree. The Second World War, the Holocaust, and the Cold War find their origins in the slaughter of war and the collapse of the old order in Europe. Indeed, while the guns have long since fallen silent in most of Europe, the First World War is still raging in places like Iraq and Syria which were the poorly conceived successor states to the Ottoman Empire, imposed upon the map by France and Britain as part of the post-war settlement.

In the middle of the last century many historians debated the causes and outbreak of the First World War. Several theses were advanced and there were many attempts to assign guilt to any one country or group of statesmen for the war's outbreak. At the same time there is a long lasting nostalgia for the pre-war era. A golden age to rival all golden ages; shattered by the horrors of war. Indeed, I am one of those swept up in that nostalgia. I feel like the late 19th and early 20th century was probably the period of greatest artistic, cultural, scientific and political progress in history, and if this trajectory had continued we would be living in a much better world than we are now.

Atop this ferment, was an outmoded and inept political system, what most historians refer to as the "Old Order" in Europe. This was the barely modified rule of the traditional aristocracy handed down from Medieval times and re-imposed on society by the reaction after the French Revolution and Napoleon. This stifling political system acted as a brake on the cultural and political ferment of the day. However, that optimism, that faith in progress, that cultural flowering were all shattered by the horrors of slaughter on an industrial scale. Instead of moving into a future with greater equality and higher standards of living, the world moved into a future of cynicism, oppression, and continual low-level strife interspersed with periods of horrific slaughter.

Some have argued that the old order knew it was inevitably going to be swept away by a rising tide of popular discontent. Many have argued that the writing had been on the wall since the revolutions of 1848 and that the old order had only held on through reversion to force and repression. Agitation by workers, women, and minorities demanding their rights was threatening to the status quo. The irony is, that the old order, which rushed into war in order to preserve the status quo, was swept away by it. Certainly the rickety Habsburg and Romanov Empires hoped that a war would bind society together in a patriotic fervor and help prolong their moribund regimes. In fact, the exact opposite was to be the case. The common people saw the death and privation and asked, "What was it all for?" and reasoned that the old regime had brought them only suffering. The Austrian and Russian war efforts crumbled under passive, and then openly revolutionary, resistance. Mutinies broke out in the German and French armies as well. In the USA, the war was used to whip up patriotic propaganda and, as elsewhere, was a convenient pretext to break up unions and progressive groups. The war led to the repressive environment of the Red Scare, a concerted wave to repression and deportation. These factors probably ended the best chance of the USA ever becoming a progressive, democratic country, and things have certainly gone downhill since. The revolutions that broke out in the wake of the conflict, sadly went down to defeat or were hijacked by the most authoritarian and power hungry in their midst. By taking the workers' movement to the extremes of authoritarian rule the Bolsheviks and their followers probably did more damage to the global movement than any other factor. They provided the pretext for political repression and military intervention any time workers started to organize.

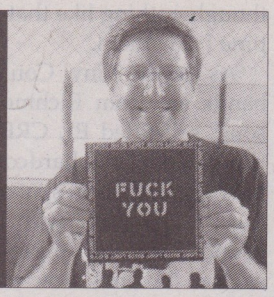
There has been a flurry of publications to mark the 100th anniversary of the war. I have been eagerly devouring them. Many of the brightest minds in European history are re-examining the old debates and revisionist histories of revisionist histories are appearing. Much more attention is being paid to the role of the Habsburg, Romanov and Ottoman Empires in the war. Ironically, after 100 years of debate on the causes of the war, I think many historians have come back to the beginning. Rather than blame the German General Staff, the Kaiser, or any other state actor, one continually feels that whole system was guilty. The world was ruled by an elite that was almost 100 years behind the times, trying to rule as if the French Revolution had never happened. The elite were playing a 20th century game by 18th century rules and were completely out of their depth. They failed to grasp the changes that had been brought by modernity. The effects of literacy and technology were lost on them. The rampant militarism, social Darwinism, and resort to play the game "by the old rules" rather than seek new solutions condemned not just one, but several generations to a world of suffering.

One of the greatest of the many tragedies of the First World War was how slow the leadership on all sides was to adapt to the changing face of modern war. Almost universally, the military men of the era had drawn the wrong lessons from recent conflicts. They all expected a short war dominated by rapid movements and aggressive, shock attacks. Despite the rapid advances in technology, which had transformed the battlefield by bringing overwhelming firepower to bear, they preached the idea of mass shock attacks with bayonet. These tactics created a cult of the offensive better suited to the age of Napoleon than that of the machine gun and howitzer. Armies everywhere in 1914 quickly learned that no amount of offensive spirit could overcome modern firepower, and wave after wave of young men were sent to their death in suicidal attacks on well-prepared defensive positions. This thinking continued to dominate even after the war settled down to a stalemate of trench warfare. The leadership simply pushed for more aggressive attacks, after longer and heavier bombardments. The result was four years of horrific bloodshed and disregard for human life. This built to an insane crescendo with the battles of 1916, notably Verdun and the Somme. While the early war was fought by professional standing armies and reservists, these were quickly depleted by the massive casualties. The burst of enthusiasm at the start of the war led to a wave of eager volunteers. These hastily trained citizen soldiers were sacrificed in huge numbers in the mass battles of 1916.

Among these young volunteers were many intellectuals and members of the educated classes. As a result, the horrors of this war were much better documented than previous conflicts fought mostly by poorly educated peasant conscripts. In the English-speaking world, few remember the details of the battles of Ypres or the Somme, but many can recall the poetry of Winfried Owen or Siegfried Sasson. And a whole generation was moved by works like *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Good-Bye to All That*.

One of my professors in the '80s told me that it was still a common nightmare among men to "go over the top" into certain death in a hail of machine gun fire. I rather doubt this is true today, as the war has faded much from modern memory and popular culture. At the very least, it will get a fresh revision from historians and perhaps a BBC documentary to remind people of the consequences of putting the lives of the many in the hands of the few.

AL QUINT



WELCOME TO STUPIDVILLE

... or maybe following what happened with the elections this past November I should call this piece "America Commits Suicide," after the SUBHUMANS song. I know many of my beloved readers, as I've stated before, don't believe in voting and think all politicians are scum, regardless of party. But, as much as I'm not a big fan of Democrats (I'm not enrolled in any party), some of the new GOP senators who will be coming to DC in January are batshit crazy. There's just no other way to put it. I'll give you one example—Joni Ernst, from Iowa. She made a name for herself with a campaign ad where she talked about how she grew up castrating pigs on a farm (look it up on YouTube) and how she'll know how to cut pork when she gets to DC. Pork, like Social Security and Medicare, which she wants to privatize. She wants to abolish the Department of Education and privatize government-backed student loans, even though she was the beneficiary of those loans herself. She loves her Smith and Wesson 9mm and says, *"...I do believe in the right to carry, and I believe in the right to defend myself and my family—whether it's from an intruder, or whether it's from the government, should they decide that my rights are no longer important."* Keep in mind this is a new US Senator talking about taking up arms against the government. And that's just *one* of the new ones…

The Republicans and their media enablers in the right-wing echo chamber were able to make a lot of hay by ginning up fear about ISIS, Ebola, and border security. Look out—we've got Ebola-infected ISIS terrorists streaming across the southern border. I'm sure there was a Republican pol or Fox News pundit someplace/somewhere who said that. If not, it's not beyond the realm of possibility. One person in the United States has died of Ebola so far and Republicans are blaming Obama for not taking swift-enough action. Never mind that his choice for Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, has been held up by Republican obstructionists, because he said that gun violence is a public health concern and has advocated for background checks. Needless to say, the NRA has lobbied hard to prevent his confirmation. And you wonder where these Republicans were in the '80s when Reagan didn't even mention AIDS until several years after the epidemic started. Or that he cut funding for AIDS research. You know damned well why...

And we may, indeed, literally be committing suicide now that climate change deniers in the Senate are going to be making plenty of decisions on energy policy and you can bet your ass they'll continue to benefit the fossil fuel industry and not do anything to reduce carbon emissions or take other steps to protect the environment ("drill baby drill!"). All while there's a new UN report that climate change is likely irreversible.

As for the "Stupidville" thing—that's what I call Peabody, the city where I live. Not a city I'm proud to be from. Especially after seeing our right-wing, teabagger State Rep. Leah Cole get re-elected. She snuck into office in early 2013 in a three-way race after the incumbent, Joyce Spiliotis, passed away. Joyce wasn't a prize, either, having engaged in some homophobic rhetoric towards a previous primary opponent (and she was a Democrat), but she was good at constituent services, I suppose. This time, it was a two-person contest and Cole edged out the Democrat, Beverley Griffin Dunne, by 400 votes out of 14,000 cast. Beverley is on the school committee, one of the few competent Peabody politicians and pretty well liked, so this came as kind of a shock. There aren't a whole lot of Republicans in the state legislature—about 35 out of 160 after this election and only a handful in the state senate. Some of Cole's votes have been very troubling—she voted against increasing the minimum wage, against extending unemployment benefits, and against a gun overhaul bill. In fact, that got her some backing from the gun lobby. Those bills still passed overwhelmingly and she was in a vast minority. So I suppose she can't do too much damage in the overall scheme of things. But I'm still ashamed to live in her district.

Here in Massachusetts, all the statewide and Congressional winners were Democrats. But my beloved commonwealth just elected a "moderate" Republican governor, Charlie Baker, who won by a small margin over Attorney General Martha Coakley. By "moderate" it means he's pro-choice, pro-gay marriage (his brother is gay), and liberal on other social issues but he's pretty much a fiscal right-winger. He trades in the well-worn tropes of welfare reform, cutting taxes, etc. He wants to drain money from public schools for charter schools. To be fair, he's not off-the-rails crazy like Republicans in most other states, where he'd likely be a Democrat.

Coakley ran an awful campaign for Senator in 2010 and lost to lightweight Scott Brown, who was unseated by Elizabeth Warren in 2012. Baker also ran a crappy campaign for Governor, in 2010 and was defeated by the incumbent, Deval Patrick. Baker has softened his image a bit since then—back in 2010, he came across as prickly and elitist. But he ran a better campaign this time around, trying to appeal to independents and moderate Democrats. Coakley's campaign was marginally better than in 2010 but it still wasn't enough and Baker eked out a victory.

Baker and Cole know how to tap into class resentment—the whole "those bums on welfare" mentality. They tout welfare "reform" and denying benefits to undocumented immigrants (Cole used the demeaning term "illegal aliens" in her campaign literature). That plays well with the more affluent suburbanites, of course, but it also effectively taps into the right-wing, blue collar demographic in places like Peabody and other blue collar cities, like nearby Lynn. This is from an op-ed column by Yvonne Abraham in the *Boston Globe*. *"'[Baker] said only one thing I liked: He's going to send people to work who are on welfare,' said Demetri Skalkos, a landlord who has tenants on Section 8 subsidies and doesn't like it. 'Why do I work like a dog but they get paid for doing nothing?'"*

Ellen has worked with homeless people, some of them housed at area motels, helping them get into Section 8 (i.e. subsidized) housing. The waiting lists are long and a good chunk of her clients work full time, usually at minimum wage or barely above. It's not likely they'd be able to afford first and last month's rent and a security deposit with what they make. I have a friend who works seven days a week around 70 hours total. He probably qualifies for food stamps. He's hardly someone sitting around doing nothing. But, hey, pull yourself up by your bootstraps, right? Fuck these people. I wonder how many of these blue collar people realize that they're a few paychecks away from financial disaster themselves? But, even though Coakley still won in Lynn, Baker was able to pick up more votes there, as well as other Democratic strongholds this time around.

As an aside, Ken Casey from DROPKICK MURPHYS was a supporter of Baker, even putting on some fundraisers for him. Ironic considering that the DROPKICKS have been strong supporters of unions and have

taken part in benefits, such as for a hotel workers' union in Boston some years back. Ken says he's a lifelong Democrat and he supported Boston's new Democratic mayor Marty Walsh's campaign last year. But Ken was supporting Baker because, as he was quoted in *Boston* magazine, *"My take on politics is that I judge them on the individual. I'll give you a perfect example: I've never voted Republican in my life, but Charlie Baker is an awesome guy. I know him through a lot of charity work and how he showed up for some things when families were in need. I don't know how I feel about his policies, but I'll tell you a good guy is a good guy."*

Charlie Baker is a good guy who in 2010 complained about teachers' pensions being too generous. A good guy who was against a ballot referendum that requires companies with eleven or more employees to provide sick time (which passed, thankfully). Baker wanted it restricted to businesses with more than fifty employees. Baker's background is in the health industry—he was the CEO for Harvard Pilgrim and, as the widely repeated story says, turned the company around. One way was by outsourcing jobs, for which he won an award—yes, there are such awards. That seems rather contrary to Ken's strong views about labor. But a good guy is a good guy, right?

My 88-year-old Aunt Frances (whom I call Franny) always ends our phone conversations with one of her favorite expressions—"The Republic will stand." She's one of my only relatives I'm still close to and I love her but I'm starting to question whether or not she's right about that. One can become skeptical when there are even more right-wing crazies elected to governorships around the country, in addition to those about to descend on DC, who want to destroy any semblance of social progress in this country over the past century. And let's not forget about one of the Supreme Court's worst decisions in my lifetime—Citizens United, which granted "personhood" to corporations and opened the floodgates for campaign contributions from right-wing SuperPACS, spearheaded by the likes of the Koch Brothers. Those are the people who *really* control what's going on in this country. It gets depressing and I probably shouldn't let the rage consume me but it's not easy.

Still, Franny's been around a lot longer than I have and lived through the Great Depression, World War II, Vietnam and 9/11. I hope she's right...

I COULD GO ON AND ON BUT I'LL STOP NOW...

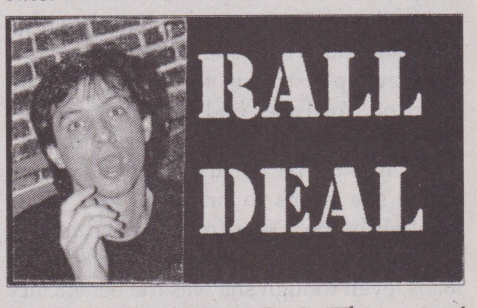
... and review some records, although space is limited once again. Martin was nice enough to send a few newish Lengua Armada records, including S.H.I.T.'s *Generation Shit* EP, recorded at the same time as the EP on Iron Lung I reviewed last time. As I said, it's quality D-beat hardcore rampage. KONTAMINAT's self-titled 7" EP is also a killer—a Chicago band with members of RAT BASTARDS, LOS CRUDOS, CHRONIC SEIZURE and others. Their demo came out in 2011 and, finally, here's their first vinyl slab. A loud'n'fast affair, as you might imagine, sounding closest to the underrated RAT BASTARDS buzzsaw attack (Jay Perris, from that band, is one of the guitarists) and it's ear-singeing throughout. There's no lyric sheet but, instead, an insert with thoughtful essays about each track, with an eye cast towards education on a few songs—vocalist Mike Friedberg is a teacher—as well as employment issues, wondering why working class people vote against their own interests. That ties really well into what I wrote about above.

Algo Esta Cambiando... is a compilation of this Buenos Aires band ALERTA ROJA, with material recorded between '82 and '86. There's an insert with a short interview, as well as Spanish-language lyrics but other details are scant—recording dates, etc. ALERTA ROJA was a band that embraced both the '77 era punk and the more Oi!-oriented sounds of the early '80s. As time went on, they added darker elements that pushed them into goth-inspired regions (JOY DIVISION, in particular), sometimes successfully, sometimes not. The moody "Atrincherado" is the best of those songs. My favorites are the ones that embrace a straightforward catchy sound, as with "Sin Oportunidad" or "Revolucion En La Evolucion." Varying sound quality but more hit than miss, with some real keepers. And they were creating their politically tinged lyrics during an oppressive era in that country, which is admirable. (martincrudo@yahoo.com)

Vinyl Conflict, a label affiliated with the record store of the same name in Richmond, VA, sent along some new 7" releases. One's actually on the Headcount label and that's the *Beerstorm Trooper* EP, the latest from Bostonian drunk punks WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? Real punks taking the piss out of the spiked'n'studded scene (*"when you fail to wear studs you are a failure"*) although most of them have played in those types of bands over the years. Catchy UK82 inspired punk providing beer-fueled fun—three of the songs mention beer, in fact. All hell usually breaks loose when they play, like the time someone set off a mortar inside a club at one of their shows, though nothing like that happened the one time I saw them.

As for the Vinyl Conflict, releases, both bands are from Richmond. On their six-song, self-titled EP, CRETINS play rough, fast, ass-kicking hardcore with angry-as-fuck vocals that are spat out with venomous rage, to go along with the bare-knuckled sound. Some really pissed-off sentiments, such as the ones directed at crusty traveler punks on "Shoogle." Then there's the pile-driving EP from ASYLUM. Five songs featuring scathing vocals and a full-tilt thrash attack fused with rock'n'roll fury, driven by powerhouse drumming and a scorching two-guitar tandem. The fury comes hard and fast out of the speakers. (324 South Pine Street, Richmond, VA 23220, vinylconflict.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, subvox82@gmail.com; subvox.blogspot.com; www.sonicoverload.net. R.I.P. former Boston mayor Tom Menino...he was one of the "good ones."



From *The Washington Post:* "The cost of turning against the Islamic State was made brutally apparent in the streets of a dusty backwater town in eastern Syria in early August. Over a three-day period, vengeful fighters shelled, beheaded, crucified and shot hundreds of members of the Shaitat tribe after they dared to rise up against the *extremists*."

From *USA Today:* "Contrary to the popular opinion that radical Islam is the primary threat to homeland security, Christianity provides the other four groups with their *extremist* rationale."

"Extremism" is the new "terrorism"—a word that so automatically conjures revulsion that its user is under no pressure to justify its use with logic or reason. The US government and those charged with disseminating its propaganda—wait, we're supposed to call them "talking points" now—in the media like to define themselves as the 50-yard line of politics. Like an ideological Goldilocks, neither too left nor too right but just perfect for this time and place and species, these self-described "centrists" and "moderates" vilify their enemies, opponents, and rivals

with the E-word.

Upon examination, however, it becomes clear that few words are less meaningless in political discourse than "extremism." (At least "terrorism" means something. Terrorism is the use of violence against civilians in order to promote or achieve political ends.)

An extremist is only an extremist in comparison to what is mainstream/centrist/moderate. Whatever system of political, religious or economic belief happens to dominate at a particular moment in time smears its opponents as extreme and therefore beyond normal and acceptable discourse. But that can change. Today's extremism becomes tomorrow's moderation under a different system.

(This is even true when the system doesn't change. In the US, 1964 Republican presidential nominee Barry Goldwater was defeated because he was considered a right-wing extremist. Today, 50 years later, he would be too far to the left to be a viable candidate in the Democratic party.)

In the quote from the *Washington Post* above, the deeds allegedly committed by the Islamic State are violent, brutal and arguably barbaric. But even within the bounds of ideological discourse of mainstream US corporate media, there is nothing "extreme" about what ISIS did. American fighter jets routinely kill civilians in the Middle East with the same impunity—ironically, sometimes while attacking ISIS. The only difference is the weapons and tactics used to achieve the same result: death.

We should demand that journalists use more specific, useful words than "extremist" to describe ideological opponents of the current system, which can credibly be called extremist in a number of important respects.

It's pretty extreme, for example, to tell sick, poor and unemployed people that they are on their own, responsible for their own trials and tribulations, and should expect no help from their government. Indeed, very few other societies in the West believe such things. Executing the mentally ill makes the US basically unique in the world. And if the "exceptionalist" American legal doctrine that US law applies in every other country, allowing Americans to violate foreign territory and capture suspects of interest to the US isn't extreme, I don't know what is.

The media conflates extremism with purism. Islamic State fighters want to restore the medieval Muslim caliphate and governance by Sharia law; those goals indicate *fundamentalism* or *purism*, not necessarily extremism.

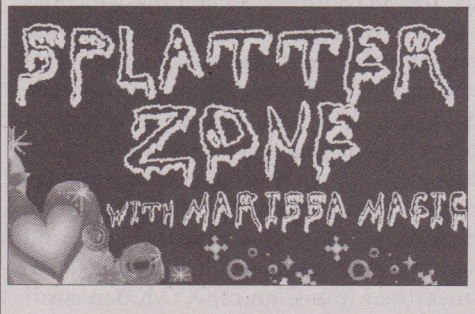
One measure of an adjective in politics is, does anyone use it to describe themselves? No one calls themselves a terrorist; no group calls itself extreme. When you see those words in print or spoken by a broadcaster, therefore, you know you are looking at a smear, an insult, lazy shorthand masquerading as argument.

Frankly, anyone who has trouble finding legitimate reasons to oppose ISIS—beyond their supposed "extremism"—doesn't deserve our attention. For starters: ISIS members believe in God; God doesn't exist. They massacre innocent civilians to carry out ethnic cleansing; a pluralistic world is more interesting than a homogeneous one. Like the Taliban in Afghanistan, they are ignorant, stupid hicks; who else would behead journalists who were willing to let them tell their story? Stupid hicks shouldn't be in charge of anything.

Most dangerously, if we accept the framing of the current state of affairs as normal and that of groups and people who want to change it as extreme, few people will ever consider alternatives to the way that we do things now. Many Americans still view communism or socialism as beyond the pale, not because of what those ideologies espouse—many of them don't know—but because they have absorbed decades of government and media propaganda describing them as fringe, weird, extreme. The result is a remarkably incurious, passive citizenry that accepts the status quo merely because it's the status quo.

Which is pretty extreme.

Ted Rall, syndicated writer and cartoonist, is the author of the new critically-acclaimed book After We Kill You, We Will Welcome You Back As Honored Guests: Unembedded in Afghanistan. *Subscribe to Ted Rall at Beacon.*



On kind of a whim, or maybe not a whim, but either way whimsical, (wow, life) I fucking bought a plane ticket to Europe to get stoned with a good friend of mine and make weird video art (we're artists, btw). I decided to fly into Copenhagen and out of Barcelona because I had never been to those places and it just seemed like a way of forcing myself to do something. A big life fuck it. Zero plan of how to get from one place to another, even less of what I would be doing in that span of time. I spent three weeks mostly alone walking around and museuming and a lot of pastries and also a lot of train rides. There were a couple days of hazed interpretive dance and improv comedy, a lot of alone time (I like it [*I love it*]), a few misty mornings (by this I mean silently weeping).

I hit a breaking point somewhere in Bavaria that had an ebb and flow to it. I fell into a routine of waking up before everyone else, crying, doing/seeing something cool, BOTTTOS, doing something dumb/time-wastey, crying, falling asleep. Feel like a brat, whine about fantastic problems. Something like five countries I had never been to before, way more cities than that, showing up on the doorstep of strangers (friends of friends). I failed at social networking and therefore was staying in hostels where I avoided socializing (pay to sleep and I gotta listen to some guy wank it out with an acoustic guitar?). On the plane over I sat next to a teenage boy who didn't seem to understand the international sign for "Can you let me out so I can go to the bathroom?" But here's this total stranger and we basically share a meal, or sit next to each other silently in close quarters and eat our individual meals, sleep for awhile next to one another. And then I get to these places I've never been and I sleep in a room with four to six other people, the majority of them I never even see and I definitely don't know anyone's name. It was all of these weirdly intimate acts with complete strangers, complete strangers I would most likely never see again. Just breeze past on the subway. I lose my mind at the thought of having to interact with people, double on strangers, and I feel like awkwardness steams off of me.

By the time I got to Barcelona I was questioning how I was going to drag myself through these last five days. The last few days had been rough, daily movements from one place to the next where I knew no one and didn't speak the language. One night in France, I returned to the place I was staying just to ask how to tell people to fuck off. (My rudimentary Spanish was really not cutting it.) How many fucking times are random men going to follow me around for twenty-plus minutes (do you think I didn't fucking take note?) only to approach me and ask where my hotel room is? And I swear to god when I said no, a couple of them then asked to take me out to coffee. Not feeling lonely, just alone, like a dot.

The hostel in Frankfurt was situated between a strip club and a McDonalds and it was definitely aimed towards young people or something. The whole place felt like existing in a future rave, rave of the future. It made me feel out of touch, but I didn't want to be in touch with that touch. It's hard to be alone but not alone. I got off the train in Barcelona and could kind of read the signs and kind of understand people and I get to this house where I'm staying with friends of friends of friends and I'm welcomed in and they've got cool books on the shelf and a good record playing and flyers on the walls and lunch and here's directions and three maps and a guide book and here is a time and a place to meet up later and we'll hang out, and then everything felt alright again. All of these new people, new friends, enthusiastically wanted to hang out with me and my mind was blown.

Barcelona was filled with tourists to the point that it was throwing me off and freaking me out, which is bizarre to bitch about considering I was one. But everything was casually amazing in there. I went to the beach a couple blocks from where I was staying and it was insane and there were seashells everywhere and I told Ieri (my new friend) about it and she was just kind of like, "Oh, that's an ugly beach." I thought about this time I was in some beach town in Wales that was littered with castle ruins and it was blowing me away and then at some point realizing it was where the teens of the town went to smoke and neck. I just did that in the parking lot of the Safeway, but a different part of the lot from where the jocks hung out. But Barcelona, seriously, wandering around and all of a sudden there are these incredible buildings or an insane sculpture in a park and it's all just kind of casually there, two sizable contemporary art museums and then a large scattering of smaller ones. And so much food. The last couple of days I was there I slept in a squat with two Ramones posters on the wall and a gigantic jar of weed on the coffee table. Nice to end on a high note. I was on planes and in airports for the next twenty-four hours, got back to my room in my home where I live and stayed awake for another twelve.

Now I'm back at work and the anxiety of routine is crushing. Overwhelmed with feelings of being a useless turd, the usual. There are some fantastic things mixed with temporary stress occurring in my life that I for once don't feel like spilling the beans on (weird, right?).

I realized today that I talk about my period a lot on this forum and I think it has a good amount to do with the fact that my cycle seems to line up with my deadlines in a way where I'm always working on this the day before or the day after my period starts (never the day of) and I'm all mood swing city, but, you know, I'm pretty sure I'm more interesting when I'm angsty so it works out.

I think that about covers it for now.

"Lest we ever do forget the price that had to be paid,
Lest we ever do forget the sacrifices they made"
—"Remembrance Day" by 4SKINS

"Dickheads! ... Dickheads!"
—Gary Hodges yelling at the crowd during "Chaos"

"What are we to them, global warming?"
—Tz, member of the Gang

=Still the New Breed=

Fuuuck, kicked in the brains again! The Gang and I feel like walking through a bolted door. Here at HQ we keep a running total of the number of times "Oi!" is mentioned in this magazine. (Two in November, that's 200% more than October. Jeez!) Not that *MRR* was ever thee place for Oi! or skinhead music (that honor should go to *Oink! Skinzine*, it was pretty...skoitastic). But it had a place in this magazine. Mostly that place was Bruce Roehrs' column. Every month it gave us, the Shaven Few, something we could sink our teeth into. Mr. Roehrs went onto bigger and better things and took his style and taste with him. So, what are we clean-cut yutes left with? Fuck all it seems. It's been a great year if you wanna belly up to that grossest of buffets: goth post-punk rehash. Come on in! Sit down and get a helping plate of hairspray, eyeliner and synthesizer. Oooh...And what's this? An unearthed (pre-Clan of) XYMOX record? A record the band tried to destroy? What's everyone's favorite Hemingway novel? *The Garden of Eden*? Balls! Hate, hate, hate!

I'm writing this column on a large overhead projector so the Gang can spellcheck and veto any of my bullshit. Here at HQ we use Robert's Rules of Order and motions are passed with Substantial Unanimity of two-thirds. There was a motion proposed and seconded to explain that some of the Gang listens to post-punk and/or music with keyboards. SOMBRAS was yelled out. As was KAS PRODUCT, and BELGRADO...Sounds like disco. I'd rather listen to the first PHIL COLLINS record. Blech. But I'm in charge so I'm only recognizing a few things: BLITZ put out *Second Empire Justice* which after about 30 years is becoming an acceptable record to admit to listening to. FRANKIE FLAME cut the tune "ManifestOi!" as OI! THE ROBOT on the *Son of Oi!* comp. And that song kills. Put that shit on a tape for your dumb friend. You prolly won't get one in return because people never care as much as you do, do they? Wanks! OPPRESSED used a drum machine on *Oi! Oi! Music*. It is immediately recognizable and sounds great. Some of the Gang even like that album by the INFAS (aka INFA-RIOT), *Sound and Fury*. I personally think that album is bogo. But hey! Who'm I? I listened to "Wait and Bleed" by SLIPKNOT the other day and it was just fine. They coulda made waves if they'd got rid of the masks and joined up with CrimethInc.

But wait! Are we here to sit in our shitty diapers and gripe about the dearth of Oi! and the surfeit of say, bar punk? I say sure, but Gang says, "No!" so we're gonna chew on some records that get us dancing in the mess-hall and make the daily 7 am to 6 pm bearable (we work 55 hours a week)! Not all of these bands have full skinhead membership, so maybe you can hang your paisley tie on that, hippie.

First up, HAWKINS THUGS have an EP out on Contra Records titled *My Own Path*. Three Skinheads! And a Psycho? Coming from the Spanish side of the Basque Country, HAWKINS THUGS vocally sound like snotty Japanese Oi! Not the hard SSS bark of SLEDGEHAMMER or their ilk but the rocking goofiness of LRF, CRESTED, and CRACKER JACKS. Plus they love skinhead stuff as much as any of those Japanese bands do. The guitars are clean on this record, and the leads are hot in the proto-Oi! style of MENACE, COCK SPARRER, and Chiswick-era SKREWDRIVER. It's a solid record and not as starchy as their perfect Lonsdale collars would have you believe. They play three originals and a cover of CAMERA SILENS "Pour la Gloire" which is boring.

More straightforward are LION'S GLORY from Monterrey, Mexico. This is their first demo and they give us three tracks of tuff, hard Oi! On the first song, "Semper Ascendens" the vocals are deep and gruff almost to the point of silliness, in

the same vein as MUMMY'S DARLINGS, or RAZORBLADE. Sometimes members of the Gang like to break out the Adidas and camo-shorts (the *other* skinhead approved uniform) and lift weights. When we feel the need to get swole we usually just blast SPIDER CREW over the HQ intercom, but maybe we'll put this song on a mix. Halfway through the second song and into the third they add a melodic edge that makes me excited for a more rounded out EP. I take it back: this is not music to pump iron to. There will be no clean jerks going on here. No snatch grabbing or maxing out. Just drinking a beer cuz yer a proud *Regiomontano*.

We're keeping things *tous internationale* this evening! And thanks to the Conans at CROM Records we get to listen to the debut EP from OUTREAU. Buzzed out guitars are at the forefront of this gritty French killer. Vocals are from the throat, not like Eddie Cheddar, but like from a throat that's been screaming at the foo'ball or *les flics* all day. Growl: "The sun is coming down / And I'm finally awake!" Drums are plodding (in the good way) and will induce knuckle dragging across any dance floor. There is a dark edge to this. Sand-freaks and Necro-nerds better run. The band adds in some two-stepping parts! Does Paris/France have the best Oi! bands? *Oui*! Three tunes, all good. Members were in HARDXTIMES, CUT THROAT, OL'CUNTS, and GONNA GET YOURS.

Sometimes when I'm bored and the rest of the Gang is drunk, I hook up our communal Acer laptop ($200 from Target!) to the TV and we scrounge around Bandcamp as a bonding exercise. Like apes picking ticks from each other. A visiting member of the Gang recommended RECONQUESTA from Sant Sadurní d'Anoia and Manresa, which are both outside of Barcelona. RECONQUESTA are working in the same direction as bands like BATTLE RUINS and CONCRETE. A slightly metallic heaviness runs throughout. First up on this EP is their battle cry, "Reconquesta". It's an...homage to Catalonia. Eh? Eh? I'm sure they have some yellow/red stripy tank tops in their closets. "Glòria" is the B-Side. It builds from a soaring guitar lead and clean bass sound that I thought was going to go into ballad territory *à* la "England" by ANGELIC UPSTARTS. But then it kicks into a full on pogo-inducing banger. With a chorus that just repeats "glòria" over and over and ends with lyrics that Goog tells me approach: "You feel that you are still alive / A reason, a purpose!" I'm pumped for them. Top notch! Internet searching reveals there is a vinyl release on the Disco Nightmare label (and a murky Facebook). Limited to 300. Or you can "name your price" for the digital copy at: reconquesta.bandcamp.com. How much is a six-pack of Coors in Barcelona? Give them that much.

Some of the Gang don't drink or ingest drugs (unless you count all the sugar-free Monster energy drinks they tear through, rednecks). We try to keep the more vocal members humble by reminding them that, like, almost two billion people on this planet don't drink alcohol, so it's not some huge deal. But don't feed that boolshit to IMPACT ZONE. These Melburnian knuckle-dragging-two-stepping-straightedge-skinhead-hardcore cue balls give us eight tunes in about as many minutes. *Wild Colonial Boys* is available from Lionheart Records. It's chock-full of lyrics like this: "And I don't care what you say / cause I'm fucking straightedge every day / I keep my mind ahead of the game!" and "Two faced scum / Stabbed me in the back / Lies and bullshit are what you give back." Does that register with your inner blockhead? It's does for me. I ordered a copy! Rah!

Home stretch! Lemme bring in Sally Struthers (secret skin!) to write this next part: Dozens of Oi!/skinhead records come out every month from all over the globe. Are these records to be ignored? No. Is this magazine ignoring them? I don't think so. The way we see it, the culpability lies in an editorial indifference towards Oi!. It's up to labels and bands to send in the music and it's up to the magazine to staff an adequate cross-section of the punk community. Or not, and we can all subscribe to Maximum D-beat'n'Goth (the Gang and I will), or whatever the new old trend is. I'm waiting on mod-revival revival. Unless a person really enjoys Oi! or is a member of the skinhead subculture, I don't expect they would give a shit or even notice that an enduring genre of punk is missing from a publication that bills itself as an "essential read if you want to keep up with new punk records and demos." Well, we did notice. And this is our clarion call. It sounds like a boot march interspersed with burps and farts. I'll close with the initial letter we wrote that was not published (it's cool):

Dear *MRR*,

On behalf of myself and my associates I volunteer a group of loyal Americans/Foreign Nationals for behind-the-scenes Oi!/skinhead rock reviewing duty in your publication. We feel that a crack group of trained gorillas / skinheads / krumbums / grizzbos / brognars / bootboys could demoralize the Hippie-Contingent and advance the cause of freedom and sick Oi! We are available for training and duty immediately."

— Turbo! Jorgensen and Gang
Pittsburgh, PA
americanbootgang@gmail.com

When this establishment of building a paper tower about punk, higher and higher every month has to change, I hope it will be transformed into a television show. Television Addict. Television Sect. TV Casualty. TV Party. How do you show music? The actual sound, not people playing it. "What can be shown, cannot be said." That's what Wittgenstein said. But what about that which can be heard? How do you describe it? This is what I try to do every month, sweating out descriptions and details of feelings I had while I was observing noise with my ears. I'm also stacking this paper tower higher and higher.

How do you show music? Could it be televised? Sounds evoke visions, for sure, but what to do with sounds that couldn't be shown or don't connect to the right scene? Paper is freedom, that's why I'm lucky, everything can be transcribed on it. It only depends on the writer. Television is something else. If a photo is truth then cinema is truth twenty-four times per second. We know it because Godard has told us. What we weren't prepared then for was television. TV is transmitting cinema 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That is an awful lot of truth. While a photo is taken forever, because it captures truth, television is just running off, like strangers on the opposite sides of an escalator; it generously spends seconds without a shrug of the shoulder. In television everybody is a star with a twisted meaning. That is, what you see is already gone. Still we think it's everything. Nothing had more impact on us than television. Through television, history has become our present and when it became our present we started to mistake reality with the selected broadcasts that were

featured on the screen. That's why some of us are keen to have television in three dimensions, even if that's just life with a camera included in the room.

Television was a great indicator of people losing their edge. When a band appeared on TV it meant they have to kick up the unwritten contract of underground brotherhood. If you were on television you were someone, while the agreement was in punk that everybody is nobody thus basically everybody is somebody. On TV, when a picture of you was shown, even for a fraction of a second, that meant everybody saw you, because we the people were watching everything that was happening on the screen. But we were watching you and you didn't even see us and this made you better than us. That's not what we have agreed on. For someone like me, who comes from among the ashes of a collapsed Soviet state, it's not new. When in the past everyone was equal but some of us were more equal. This is television, it's corrupted socialism.

Television had become our neon bible, written by producers who used mechanical techniques to satisfy all our needs, to answer all our questions, to tell us how the world works. These modern apostles made prophets of everyone who happened to stumble into the spotlight where they had fifteen minutes of fame to die for our sins and redeem our souls.

Then came cable television, which changed the game forever. They were the Calvinists who set up a colorful counter-religion that opposed the monochrome hegemony. It felt like a kiss, as did the idea of a fanzine, a half-serious situation taken deadly seriously by its doers. This freedom of self-expression set on the same idea of which we are being jaded by today. That everyone could be on the screen and everything will be relevant. But after all, the only thing that has become relevant is to get on the screen in one way or another. Noble wars are fought so everybody has a word to say, a vision to create, an audience to reach. This was the crusade of cable channels. It's good, it is how things should be. And what is clearer than the fact that, since television has disappeared from our daily routine, the channel not the function, everybody speaks for themselves and nothing matters anymore? All of us have our platform, our screen, but instead of telling our truth we just puke into each other's mouths in the middle of an ever-ongoing religious war with disco lights vibrating and some cheesy music trying to sell the whole scene as romantic realism. You should ask, is it the man or is it the channel? It's always the man and we must be shameful to see how we don't give a fuck unless a band plays in front of a disgusting grey wall in between two artificial ferns. For some reasons when a band is taken out of its natural environment, aka a show in a basement, the game becomes more serious. Well mostly for us who are lazy, fat, and too comfy. No surprise why I maintain a weird obsession with punx in cable television shows.

The young and restless still get their kicks from the real things. I spent a good amount of time marveling on a live footage of Glue playing in a basement where fellow *MRR* contributor Al Quint is jammed up in the first row and he is being so enthusiastic about what he is a part of, I couldn't do anything else but stare at his unstoppable love for punk. On the way he moves, how he observes and blends together with this fullness of teenage angst. It's perfect, it's touching, it's reality but captured thus it's more real. It's you and me. And, of course, Al. It's mostly Al but it's a reflection too, the same one everyone has when they hear something that is reaching further than listening to a genre, dressing in a way or be able to push people in a basement. This is it, the point, feeling great, because what the fuck else do you want from life?

Me? I'm fine. I am being enthusiastic about that bizarre scene when Siege performing their hearts and guts out in a blindingly bright, huge white room that has electricity and an American flag in it. They play for infinity for an unseen but imagined crowd. They want themselves to be recorded in their best possible form. All that screaming, the falling and crawling on the ground, the power, that raw mutant energy is captured in this one terrific performance. As if they knew when you could shine for fifteen perfect minutes you can shine forever. The chase of catching up with themselves and the success; even though they couldn't keep up with their own self-dictated speed they still are amazingly good. A voice from a known but distant place, inhuman screaming because it's too human. What is? To live and be confused. It is fragile, still it boldly tries to conquer the world. It gathers an audience for itself. They don't seem to care about it if it's too bizarre, they are playing and the rest is history. This makes sense because a show in front of a camera is more relevant, just like every show someone writes a review about. This is television and cameras are expensive. No one could fuck up the scene. Top World? When Jesus and Mary Chain are yelling that they wanna die, they wanna die and all the kids are dancing like it's another bubblegum pop song. The beat is right, the lyrics are only spent on entertainment. There's no disturbance. No one gets it, it's a picture, it should look cool, the rest is for the rest.

There is Huggy Bear as a driving force of showing they are really at the top of their game. A flashing, vibrating vision of power, fashion that is in the hands of the people, dictated by the youth, noise, some sense, a lot of sense, anger against oppression that until than was obvious for a society that's classes has been distributed by assholes. It's a dance party, a revolutionary one, a message sent out to everyone who is afraid of us. It's an offense. But those who get offended deserve it.

Somewhere else Die Kreuzen is defending punk for a TV host teenager girl, then playing out their Midwest teenage boredom, amazing and super awkward freak hardcore. It feels like a fault inside a system and at the same time it's great that even in this environment this music could function and show kids like you and me that adolescent noise is important. The manic apathy that wraps around their set is terrific, the way they are aware of the fact that this music is brilliant, and still they hesitate to destroy the whole world with it. It's their secret; for them on that footage there's no audience so they can reveal everything. Music like this is for the depths of lonesome weekend nights spent pasting together fanzines, for being alright with your own self, for awkward raging.

Agnostic Front was making fun of a cable show by switching instruments, faking notes, revealing their true selves: just a bunch of idiot kids who by mistake made some very good hardcore music when they were super young. It's funny because it's true, and funny because for once they laugh as well. It's good evidence of everyone who was young and innocent. For me it's a mirror in which I can see society. How something innocent got spoiled and became total cop hardcore.

No Trend presenting in a nauseating scene the truth about teenage love, as if they were left alone in an empty space but they are fine with it. It's funny, brutal, I can dance to it, you can be frightened by it. Just like how Flipper set themselves loose and proved they don't give a damn if they are disturbing as many minds as they can. Flipper understood the monotonic power of the television. That if you ever happen to be on screen

then no one will make you leave before you finish what you want to say. They pushed all their brain hammering songs on an unprepared and unaware audience. If you are lucky and have a soft mind, then this mechanic drilling won't damage it, it will just give you a rough massage. Videodrome.

Lost Kids playing "Cola Freaks" and everybody is happy. Some Danish avant-gardism, painted faces, moving melodies, harsh guitars. An abandoned disco is taken over by freaks who get high on Cola.

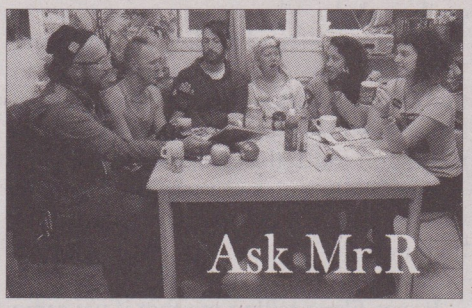
Blitz playing "New Age" on amphetamines, convincing enough so that bitter aftertaste of European speed appears in the back of your mouth. The drummer is standing, there isn't a chair for him, the singer is chewing the inner wall of his cheek. The smack kicked in. They find every one of the interviewer's questions offensive. It's again something that has gone wrong, a reporter's life is being threatened by speed skinheads who aggressively force amazing melodies into their really dumb music. Burgess nightmare transforms into reality, the generation that was crammed into the land of block-of-flats has came out, here's your abandoned baby, Maggie.

Even that is pure gold when Thin Lizzy's performing some Christmas carol with the Sex Pistols. As the drummer of the Pistols is trying to hit a soap bubble instead of his kit with his sticks. It's another knife in the back of punk, so what? We are already zombies, still not as bad as a butter commercial.

Stalin performing for a huge audience that is sitting, while teenage girls are trying to catch up and clap in rhythm. They fail but nice of them to try. The show seems as if the Fabulous Stains were reality. Even the make-up fits. There is something weird in presenting this mess to a tamed crowd. Is this art? They don't get it, still they accept it? Should it be shown? Too many questions. There's even a black and white, but beautifully filmed sketch documentary on Japanese bands performing. My favorite is SS playing "Mr. Twist." In every ending of all their limbs there is concentration, lust, and hunger for more. As if this was a religion. It's hardcore with surf guitars, weird punk with serious aggro fun. It's noisy, weird music in which Japan was always one of the best, but SS executes its songs with a detailed care, it makes sure there isn't a second when tension goes away. Perfection.

There is more. Beat Happening performing "Black Candy." Suburban Reptiles "Saturday Night Stay At Home," Suburban Lawns "Janitor," Unit 3 with Venus "Beer," Mercenárias "Polícia." And more and more and more. What is no more is television itself. It's dead. Just like some people think punk is. Well folks, we outlived MTV. Jello, I hope you are happy now.

punkersblock.blogspot.hu / vargyai.viktor@gmail.com



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, so we might as well do that here. Think of it more as an opinion column though. (...And if we need a tagline for that, I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by the subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")

Dear Mr. R,

I know the elections already happened, but when the news can pretty much tell you the results a week ahead of time does voting matter? When Princeton University says the United States is no longer a democracy does anything we do (on the larger scale) matter?

— Still Bored With the USA

I have definitely been made to feel embarrassed about being both a punk and a voter at the same time. Maybe rightly so. I guess I should've figured out, by now, that I should be listening to those people who hold microphones at hardcore shows, and just like, try *smashing* the system for once instead of uselessly participating in it, but maybe I just have to face the facts: I'm a voter. I know that on some level I like doing it for the same reasons I like to do scratch-off lotto tickets. I buy the three-dollar BINGO cards cause they take a little bit longer to do, and the entire time (five minutes-ish) that I'm scratching them off, I think that I *might be* about to get rich. Like maybe. You know, 'cause what if I did this time? That's even how the lottery advertises itself to people now. In California they have these big billboards that say, "Believe in Something Bigger," and it makes sense to want to, especially depending on your class/social status, etc.; hope is clearly a really great selling point. But I still think voting is an important thing to do, even when that hope seems kind of ridiculous.

Princeton University saying that their research (data compiled between the years 1981 and 2002) shows "ordinary citizens have virtually no influence over what their government does in the United States" is an obviously horrible and hopeless thing to hear, and it's not as though you weren't feeling that before this Princeton confirmation, but I assure you that choosing apathy as a response guarantees that the trend continues. While presidential voting is definitely the choice between two serious DBs, it's also choosing which one of these people is going to be the picker of our Supreme Court justices, and which one is most likely to let good or evil legislation become law for four entire years. The EPA is *just now* beginning to close up some of the loopholes in the Clean Water Act that allowed big business to exploit our waterways way back in the days of the Bush administration. But fine, you don't believe in voting—then choose direct action, choose protesting or being really loud or like, getting a tattoo on your neck of a thumbs down or something. You never know what will work or who will listen, but it's worth it to try. Things change and surprise us all the time. Like what's been happening to same-sex marriage and marijuana laws, the fact that sports people care about whether or not their team's mascot is racist, or any single thing that that new pope has said. In the world of popes that guy is being shockingly reasonable for some reason.

Mr. R,

I really want to get a matching tattoo with my partner. They are sorta over tattoos at this point. I feel like what we have is more powerful than any shitass square's "marriage vows," but I also don't want to pressure them because a lot of people can agree on the superstition related to getting tattooed together...How should I reframe this to myself so I can declare my love appropriately?

—Never Say Forever

This question must be proof that you value what you have with this person since you want to think about ways to reframe the issue to yourself, and not ways to convince your partner to do a thing they aren't interested in doing. Because really, at a certain point, feeling as though you *have* to get tattoos together as a "forever" couple

gesture, might as well be the same as those very squares taking their marriage vows. Which is a relief of social pressure and proof that somebody loves you, and I'm sure that it feels really great for someone to be willing to bet however much paperwork it must take to get a divorce that their love for you will be truly everlasting. But that ain't for everyone.

I think that so many tattoo couples must seem cursed because of all the emphasis put on these sorts of gestures over actual positive interaction, or maintenance of the actual feeling of "partnership." Maybe this is also visible in a lot of couple's decision to have babies when a relationship is on the rocks. So maybe it's better just to choose to get tattoos together proving how much you both are still really into that TV show *Lost*. But if you're not really into marriage, and this other person isn't into any tattoos at all, maybe you could start a band together instead and collaborate on songs and really cool merch, or start a family weed business or something as a way to tie yourself to a reminder of true-life compatibility.

Send me your questions! I have so much opinionated love to give. Save this number to your phone for all your advice needs on the go! Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357) or go way back in time to, like, 2003 when people still sent emails: askmrr@mail.com

As the snow fell silently over the West Village, all my wife, Elena, and I could hear was the occasional sound of horns blaring as children screamed and laughed in delight as the sound of snowballs would crash quietly into their down jackets, or not so quietly into the occasional car window.

Which would always be followed by more laughs, and, of course, a lot more horns beeping.

Finally, after not being able to contain our curiosity anymore, Elena, Jett, Rocket, and myself, all bundled up like Ralphie in *A Christmas Story*, stumbled our way out our door, down one flight of stairs, and into the beautiful snow covered city which I had called home now for over thirty years straight.

"It's breathtaking," said Elena, and the cold air whipped up some powdered snow and deposited it in our hoods and all over the dog's faces.

I told her I agreed and suggested we make our way up the street with all the guys and gals on cross country skis, and kids pulling their younger siblings along on their sleds.

Of course, Jett and Rocket, our Yorkshire Terrorists saw this, and demanded in the form of barking to be somehow be transported around so their precious little feet didn't touch the cold, cold snow.

Eventually I picked them up. I think it was the tone of their voices, or that look in their eyes.

Naw.

It was Elena telling me that if we came home and our dogs were "Pupcicles", she'd be very angry. *Very*.

And I certainly didn't want that.

The last time I had pissed her off a hurricane came and hit New York City, and ruined plenty of lives and property. Hell, the water in our building was only a few inches below our floor, which meant it was about level with our downstairs neighbor's ceiling.

Oh yeah, then there was the one time, recently, when I fell asleep while awaiting take-off from JFK to one of her long winded stories of her wasted youth and the street vermin she called her friends and hung out with.

Wait!

That was me.

Never mind.

Anyway, it was cold but beautiful out. We took the fur-faced kids to the "West Village Dog Run", a private and exclusive club for West Village Dogs, only, and the humans under their care. It was nice to sit around while they sniffed one another's butts, and perhaps took a quick bite out of a lone piece of poo, if no one was looking, or had found it, of course.

***

So Elena and I made our way to our luxury dog run for the kids to stretch their legs out, and for us to socialize with neighbors like Sarah Jessica Horseface, that kid from that "Do You Want To Play A Game" movie, and Peter, that little guy who kills lots of big people and has a dog twice his size and is on some show on HBO about a family that fucks and kills one another. Kinda like mine. Except we don't have that kind of dough the Lanisters do. Or if my dad did, he'd have never admitted to it.

So, Elena and I watched the kids as Jett sniffed his way around the corners of the run, picking up on scents of God-Knows-What.

Or cares.

But that's our Jett!

He may not be playing with a full deck, but he certainly has more than enough in the love and licks department.

Rocky is quite the opposite. Seeing as he is only seven months old, everything is NEW to the little guy, and he just loves being alive. It's something really refreshing and good to see and feel.

That vibe of everything, every taste, smell, sight, sound, pheromone that's in the air. I think we picked up on it too as most of the time as soon as we got home, we undressed from our wet clothes, hopped in the shower together, and just got more wet.

But not that particular morning because, as we were about to make our way out, a familiar laugh piped up and it sounded like it's just behind me. Also a feeling of real warmth and caring.

Then the voice said, "I knew I'd find you here, you always did want to be some sort of father. We all know how much the kids love you and how much you love and have done for them."

That voice, that sound, those words, that laugh. Suddenly I got total goosebumps all over my body and I felt a shiver go down my spine. But it wasn't a cold one. Quite the opposite,

It was warm and friendly, and somehow, very welcoming.

"Turn around George," said my new wife, Elena, "I think you know this guy. God knows you got enough pictures of him around, well, everywhere."

I spun around slowly and this stupid grin froze on my face freezes when I saw him.

And it didn't go away.

"Don't remember me?" asked the little white-haired guy who is busy chain-smoking and laughing.

I do but can't spit out the words.

"It's me, George, Tim Yohannan, the inventor, investor, creator, and fist editor of *Maximum Rocknroll*, and I am the Ghost Of Christmas Past…"

To Be Continued…

ENDNOTES:

1) The new Dwarves album is the best record out there besides the last Dwarves album, and the new "Call Of Duty" comes

out tomorrow, so I gotta get busy…
2) Cheetah Chrome's new one on Plowboy is *punk rock* at its finest. The real deal. The inventor of the Dead Boys with new songs that will have you spazzing out and wishing like hell you were around for his first band. But no worries, Cheetah is a great frontman and one of the nicest guys on the planet.

Genjing Records: Connecting China's Underground With The World One 7" At A Time

This month we head off to Beijing to have a chat with Nevin Domer, US expat, musician, and founder of Genjing Records, one of Asia's leading underground hardcore, punk, and leftfield labels.

We had a chat that would leave any Communist party eavesdroppers on the line somewhat confused! We talked about the label's creation, its ambitions, and what's coming next. Domer recalls that he started the label back in 2010 as a way for him to release 7"s and splits with his Beijing hardcore-punk band, Fanzui Xiangfa.

He quickly realized that the label could also help other Chinese bands without access to the mainstream release vinyl, something that wasn't happening in China at the time. He wanted to provide a more DIY outlet for his musical endeavors while still being employed at China's biggest independent music label, Maybe Mars.

He wants the label to serve as the best curator for new music coming out of China and although Domer says he is not focusing on any particular style, output tends to span punk and post-punk, as well as some (anti)folk and experimental music.

Domer has, through the split 7" concept, aimed to engage the Chinese underground scene with similar acts around the world. "We function in a DIY way, not signing bands, which also allows us to do 7"s for bands on other labels and co-releases with labels abroad," he says. "We've focused mainly on 7"s so far and generally like to do splits with bands abroad as a way to bridge the gap between the Chinese scene and scene(s) abroad. We've worked with foreign acts like SS20 (Germany), Daighila (Malaysia), Tussle (USA), pg.lost (Sweden), God Bows to Math (New Zealand), Underground Lovers (Australia) and Flavor Crystals (USA). Each time we pair them up with a similar Chinese act, as a way to introduce them to audiences here while spreading awareness for the Chinese acts abroad."

Genjing currently has 32 releases under its belt, and most recently released a Fanzui Xiangfa split 7" with Bad Nerve (Umeå, Sweden) and the Fanzui Xiangfa *Discography* LP, both of which came out in time for the band's recent European tour.

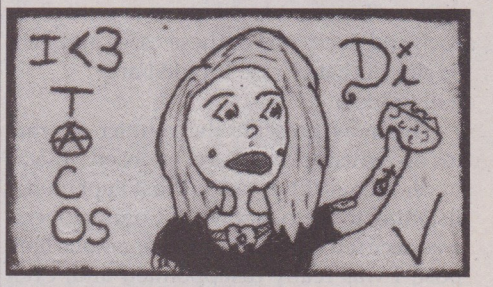
Also the label has released a 7" for Maybe Mars act AV Okubo titled *Opium/Herion*, produced by Andy Gill from Gang of Four. The A-Side is from their Maybe Mars sophomore release *Dynasty*. Genjing are about to release the new After Argument LP *This Is Not Your Game*, a side project for P.K.14 frontman and Maybe Mars label head, Yang Haisong. It's worth noting for you fact finders out there that the most recent PK14 album was produced by no less than the great Steve Albini.

Domer's now a busy man. There are three 7"s coming up in December: a rockabilly split between Beijing's Rolling Bowling and Spain's 13 Bats; a single with an unreleased B-Side for the Maybe Mars signed the Yours, from Hong Kong; and a split release between Beijing's Hot & Cold and Tonsstartsbandht (USA).

The Yours is a band that started its career in the mid 2000s, sounding like a wonderful fatal car crash between the Fall's *Live at the Witchtrials* and My Bloody Valentine. Your columnist remembers putting them on in a warehouse back in 2008 and they all turned up dressed like characters out of a D.H. Lawrence novel and made an unholy racket for 40 minutes or so; that still brings a smile. Their sound has matured somewhat over the years as studios and producers have worked on polishing them up. Check out the early Yours on YouTube and their most recent full-length on Hong Kong's Lona Records.

Now, we know that it's all well and good telling you about all this great new music but anybody who's actually tried to buy underground Asian music will know that it can be quite tough to actually locate the records you want. But don't worry, Domer's made it easy for us. The releases are available in the US through Far Out Distant Sounds and in Australia through Tenzenmen. They are available to stream on the Genjing bandcamp page and are available for purchase worldwide from their website, genjingrecords.com.
More diamonds in the rough for you next month.

Contact Sean Hocking of Metal Postcard Records at metalpostcard.bandcamp.com soundcloud.com/metal1postcard.



"Kill yr idols / Sonic Death / It's the End of the World / and Confusion is Sex"

When I was a kid I had heroes and idols, much like any kid does. I wanted to dunk like Air Mike, dance like MJ, and glide like Oksana Baiul. All curiosities start by witnessing some grand display. It's a treat to watch a master of any craft perform. While the all-American slogan, "You can be anything you want to be" is shown by age to be the most base of propaganda, what becomes more apparent is that our culture has a serious hero worship complex. Do you remember "Joe, the Plumber"? Who the fuck was that guy? Yet we all know him and for "fifteen minutes" he was idolized as the perfect every-man. We will make a hero out of anyone these days while the story is hot. The only thing juicier for the TMZ and gossip crowds than a new obsession is seeing them fall—and they all fall.

It's widely known amongst my friends I am a fan of Sonic Youth. In 2014 both Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore made supreme asses of themselves. Moore called Jezebel, a feminist news and critique site "Gender Fascism" going on to mansplain how love works. This started because Jezebel called him a dick for having a relationship with another woman behind Gordon's back, and monogamy = sigh. There are flaws on both sides here, but Moore's hissy fit was disheartening and childish. Soon thereafter Kim Gordon interviewed Chloë Sevigny about a role she had coming up, playing a trans woman. In the interview they discuss trans women in a gross "men in dresses" way, lumping them into "pre-op" and "post-op," the latter qualifying full womanhood. Kim also states "men and women have different brains," showing a true lack of any understanding of gender,

sex and biology. She would be well suited to reading *Whipping Girl* by writer/biologist Julia Serano. Gender-essentialism is dead, kill it dead please.

That is just one rock'n'roll couple. Just look at punk and its major problems with rape culture, sexism, queerphobia and racism. People who invest their emotions into these icons can be crushed to find out what scumbags lay backstage. America spews "Innocent until proven guilty" in each and every one of these cases and I am so sick of that phrase I could barf.
Kill yr idols.

This now presents the conflict of what to do when people are exposed. I was never a Causalities fan so I just kept on not listening to them, but when Connor Oberst was accused of rape in an anonymous blog post, I was really disappointed and, even though I wouldn't consider him a top-notch musician, his songs often made it on to my twitterpated mixtapes for new crushes, but after that, it bums me out too much to continue. Since that was basically the only place Bright Eyes and Oberst existed in my life, I probably haven't listened to a song of his by choice since. (Also, I am aware that the woman made a statement saying it was fabricated, but bear in mind Oberst almost sued her and, as a lawyer friend of mine noted, it's 100% likely that she had to make such a statement in a settlement to prevent the famous, wealthy musician from doing so.) I feel better assuming he's a scumbag than possibly supporting him hoping he's not.

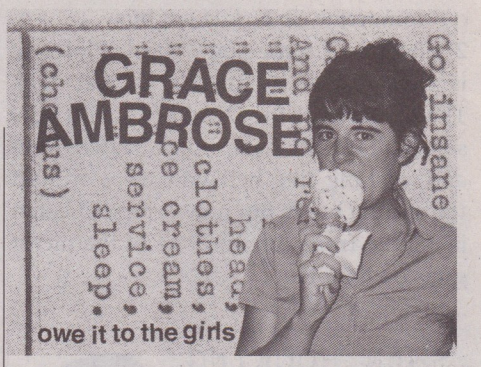
And that's the crux of this, isn't it. It's a personal choice whom you support, but there is nothing to be gained in hero worship. I wouldn't go as far as to say I assume everyone is shit; I am actually a fairly optimistic person and not yet jaded in to full on misandry. We have limited amounts of emotional energy to put out into the world. We try to hold tight to friends, maintain work relations, and hopefully pursue some hobbies and passions and that is a lot of work already. When I started moving away from seeing people who excelled at things I value and placing them on a pedestal, I found I placed more energy into friendships and saw the amazing things my friends (and myself) were capable of. Here it is folks, my mandatory "Isn't Punk Cool?" moral of the story. I watched *We Are the Best*, a film about three girls in Stockholm who discover a community practice space and start a punk band. Spoiler alert: The film ends with the three girls playing at a vets hall, sloppily performing an anti-bro song "Hate the Sport" and being called communist cunts by the crowd, so they chant back "We are the best!" This is the attitude that we should adopt. When you proclaim yourself as the best, you now have a reputation to keep up, and hopefully that keeps you on your toes about being the best. This includes treating people the best.

One of my best friends recently gave me a tattoo of a dagger and the text "kill yr idols" which is what got me thinking on this column trope. They are a wickedly dedicated tattoo artist and being not even a year into tattooing, they are already super talented. That didn't happen over night. I watched them fill sketchbooks with flash, seek out apprenticeships and immense themselves in opportunities to eventually get into a shop. We met because they treated me the best and I had the good sense to take notice. This person was the type who came to help me move, would bike cross town to help me when I was locked out, and saw favors as an opportunity to make someone happy, not a chore to be avoided. I try to live like that too, and deeply appreciate finding such a friendship. Seeing them now, acting on their passion and doing it so well is just the counter balance to facebook's never-ending doom feed and keeps me from losing all respect for humanity. Check out their work and if you're in DC, support a punk and get some ink: Grant Gaudry, @dinosaursdied on Instagram, geetattoos@gmail.com.

Trading out my obsession with only finding the best underground bands from the past with participating in a local scene, opened up a new way of perceiving achievement, and in so, I feel has brought me more meaningful friendships and experiences, and certainly made me a better, more accountable person. Hearing a new-to-you punk masterpiece is truly satisfying, don't get me wrong, but that feeling doesn't have shit on watching your friends succeed at their passions and shock you with their talent. I am fortunate to have some hella talented friends as well. While it's fun to say "I knew them before they were popular", when it's a friend it's more "I saw their beauty and now you're seeing it too!" and that's one of the most rewarding feelings I've found in life, and seeing someone grow, hone and polish their craft makes it seem so easy to do it yourself.

The time is over for self-pity and sitting around doting on celebrities while feeling uninspired. Plan some craft dates, make music (or musical noise) with some friends, doodle every chance you can, write out your thoughts, and drag your friends with you into the hole.

Kill yr Idols, Worship yr Friends.



Shortest print cycle of my time here so far (thanks, Thanksgiving) and somehow we're managing to send the magazine to the printer the earliest yet. For the first time ever, I'm writing this column before the do-or-die mark, which means I can look forward to a weekend full of properly un-punk activities: Pauline Oliveros at the Berkeley Art Museum and folk records in bed.

The house has felt alive this past month—our charming visitors from Brazil, new shitworkers and reviewers learning the ropes, pizza party radio shows. We interviewed a candidate for the distro coordinator position and he asked a question about the social life of the house, the day to day. Robert Collins said something like, "Yeah, the records are cool, but the people you meet here? Absolute tops." He couldn't be more right. Without them, Lydia and I just watch over a house full of records, two monkeys punching letters on a keyboard.

After all, what's the point of having coordinators if there's nobody else to coordinate? Tim Yohannan was incredible for many reasons, but one of them was his ability to get people excited about contributing to the magazine, about taking on tasks as they were delegated, and pulling their weight to get the issue out into the hands of desperate punks every month. George Impulse (who has been laying out the columns section of this magazine for over two decades) told me, "Tim couldn't even type." I'd like to believe that's true.

It seems like people feel as if they need to be invited in order to participate in things (what happened to the punk idea of making your own life?)...I'm mystified by the number of people who think that *Maximum* is mystifying—for the punks by the punks, could it be any clearer than that? You send us stuff, we share it with the world. What could be better?

At the same time, I never contributed to this magazine before I moved out here to run it. Why? Probably because no one

asked me to. Stupid! Four months in, that seems unfathomable to me. I wasted years of my life! I've bugged all my friends, so now I'm moving on to you. Consider this column your official invitation to take up a coveted spot on the shitworker list on page three. If you've ever complained about the content in this magazine, here's your chance to fix what you think is lacking; if you've ever wanted an excuse to call up your favorite band and get them to talk to you about what got them into punk, now's the time to get them on the line. If you don't wanna do those things, then why are you reading? Here they are, the nitty-gritty nuts and bolts of what you need to do to get your genius words in inky print, or how you can help us get the missives of more monkeys pecking at more keyboards out to the masses. Reach out to us at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com with questions!

Interviews

We are always looking for interviews with bands and other punk practitioners from around the world. As long as a band fits within our scope (*and* they haven't been interviewed for the magazine in the fast five years), we're interested! Put together a conversation and send us the transcription along with an introduction, and 10-12 high-resolution images, saved as TIFFS—live shots, posed shots, album art, flyers, logos, you name it. The more we have, the better we can make your interview look. We generally look for a minimum word count of 2,000. The high end varies but 6,000 is pretty much the upper limit. As always, we reserve the right to edit any submissions—and no guarantees that we'll publish everything!

Scene Reports

We wanna get a sense of what it's like to be a punk in your town—record shops, DIY venues, tape labels, you name it. Give us a list of bands, sure, but also tell us things that we can't find out about on the internet. If you're psyched about what is happening around you, tell us why we should be psyched too!

Longform Articles

I reviewed a killer zine this month, *Kill Your Parents Garden* #8, which included a long, well-researched article about Soviet lady-punk, Yanka Dyagileva. We are not beholden to the interview form here at *Maximum Rocknroll*—if you have an extended reflection on or analysis of some element of punk culture, past or present (of if you've been looking for an excuse to spend your time embarking on one) we wanna read it. Maybe it's right for the magazine—and maybe we know people who can help you with your research.

Photospreads and Photo Blog

It seems like you can't go to a gig nowadays without someone's DSLR getting in your face. I'm all for documentation—if we don't do it, no one else is gonna—so rescue those photos languishing on your hard drive and let us use them! Our photo blog features all kinds of punk photographers—past, current, live shows, people hanging out—and runs every Monday. Get in touch with the editor Matt: photoblog@maximumrocknroll.com. If you have enough photos from your scene, fest, or trip to make up a photo spread in the magazine, talk to us!

Proofreading

This one's easy. Every month, after we've picked the content we are going to run, we send the rough text out to our arsenal of proofers, who give it a thorough once-over before us coords take a look at it. They use the *MRR* style guide (which includes the proper spelling of both D-beat and poseur) and edit one interview or scene report a month for us according to it. If you are a detail-oriented grammar freak whose eyes start bleeding when you see the mistakes made by our harried brains in these pages, this is the job for you.

Layout

You'll need InDesign or a similar program for this—we'll send you an edited text and color corrected images, you'll have about a week to turn around a print-ready layout. Like proofing, this can be done from anywhere in the world.

Letters and Columns

Send us a letter! We aren't afraid of criticism (and we love getting compliments). Recently we got some letters that were so funny that we started asking their author to contribute a column. Turbo! and Gang from Pittsburgh, PA have all the news that's fit to print about Oi!, this month and every month going forward. You don't have to be asked though—if you have something to say (and you think other people wanna hear you say it!) send us a guest column (1,000-2,000 words).

Website Editors

If you're paying close attention (and I know you are), you'll have noticed our website activity slowly ratcheting up. We've got some new weekly features (New Blood, Reissue of the Week) and some slowly growing contributions—check out Carolyn Keddy's killer expanded top ten (multimedia!) and the playlists that accompany certain features of the mag. We're looking for people worldwide who are interested in helping work on the website from afar—editing our New Blood section, working on developing videos and video interviews, asking What's the Scoop? questions in your town, and more. We're still in the beginning phases of working on this big project, but if you have web skills (or enthusiasm!) that you'd like to share, get in touch.

Local Shitwork

If you're a punk and you live in the Bay and you don't come by and work on *Maximum* stuff—what's wrong with you? There's something for everyone here, with all different levels of commitment. We're looking for zine and record reviewers, drivers who wanna pick up the mail and pack orders, people who wanna scan and green tape and file records, and dedicated folks who want to take on more long-term tasks, like collection inventory, documenting our zine archive, and digitizing back issues for future online publication. You can start by coming to a new issue day (free pizza)! If you haven't been, the house is a killer place to hang out—not a punk house, a house house, with a beautiful courtyard and a constant killer soundtrack. If you want to come by and get a tour and figure out where you might be able to fit into our constantly churning machine, give us a shout. There are people who visit us every day, some who stop in once a week, and others who come by once a month. There's always something to do and always someone interesting to talk to.

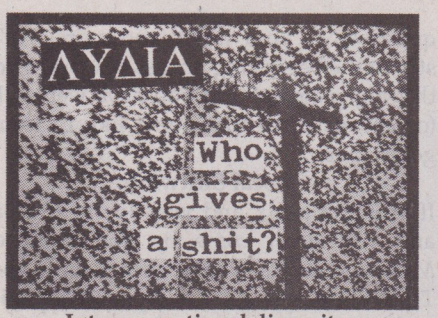
There's no reason why anyone should feel as if they aren't able to be a part of this magazine. It's here, a resource for the DIY punk and hardcore community worldwide—a community which extends much further than this city, this coast, and this country. We always welcome the help—god knows we need it!—and we wanna expand the *Maximum* family! What's stopping you? Write to me at grace@maximumrocknroll.com and tell me what you're going to do to make punk happen this month, let me know what we could do to make you feel more welcome here, and submit some fukkn content to *Maximum Rocknroll*, the longest-running unofficially not-for-profit (you think we're makin' money off of this thing?) punk fanzine on planet Earth.

ENDNOTES:

1) I'm gonna perish if I don't get a Coneheads demo. Drop in the mail to the PO Box ATTN Me.

2) I know I am a freaky Frau superfan, but you gotta read their interview in the magazine this month. Your life depends on it.

3) Still looking for that special coordinator someone…share a life and a brain with yours truly, what's not to like?



Intergenerational disparity

"What are you going to do after you leave *Maximum*?" people ask as soon as they find out I am planning to step down from coordinator in the New Year. I always hesitate to reply, because I don't really know the answer. "Oh, I don't know…" I trail off. "Work, save up some money… find somewhere to live that doesn't cost an arm and a leg." But really, I know these ideas are nothing more than temporary answers to the greater question at hand: "What are you going to do with the rest of your life?" This is a funny question to me, because it hasn't been one asked of young people for all that long. Existential drifting aside, I feel lucky to even have an option.

I recently came across an article about Millennials. It said there are typically five stages of "entering adulthood." Graduating high school, leaving your parents' house, establishing financial independence, getting married or finding a significant other, and having children. It said that, in 1960, 77% of women and 65% of men had ticked all five of those items off their To Do list by the time they were 30 years old. This sounds about right and, one might add, what has been considered for many decades to be "normal." In the year 2000, fewer than half of women and one-third of men had checked those five items off their list by age of 30. That got me to thinking: what do young punks want out of life? What do *I* want out of life? Surely a happy community is contringent on a happy individual, but what brings people happiness these days? How do they define a "fullfilled life?"

Punks have always been a unique but never truly detached segment of the broader society. We may be its rejects, mutants, parasites, or saboteurs, but we are still, however unwillingly, connected to it in some way. The kids getting into punk today view the world quite differently to, say, John Lydon (and thank fucking god for that because that guy's a joke). I would love to know how Generation Z perceives the world. It's a confusing, messed up place and I keep thinking about the ways we can change that.

I think of my granddad's generation, the Silents, born and raised during the Great Depression and WWII. I think of the generation before that, the so-called Greatest Generation, who fought in WWI; the common mores they upheld and the institutions they so loyally supported: their country and flag, their religion, the army and state. Their belief in the "sanctity of marriage" and going to church on Sundays. The gender dynamics and class roles. Education was for the few and the arts still a novelty of the elite. Those were the days when kids were to be seen and not heard, and you basically entered adulthood in your late teens. No gap year to discover yourself. You worked hard, you found a spouse, you had kids, and you died in a rocking chair. The end.

I think back to my parents' generation, the Baby Boomers, born 1946-64. I remember reading from my mum's WWI and WWII poetry and history books; the triumphs and tragedies of a generation written up as lessons to be learned in university classrooms, in a "free world" they help rebuilt. For the Baby Boomers, perhaps in the US more so than in Europe, everything was promoted as possible, as long as you worked long and hard enough for it: the pursuit of education and career opportunities, a neat and happy life, a positive outlook on the future. "Pull your socks up old chap, you can do it!" These wholesome notions shattered and the deep-rooted foundations upholding them shook as the '60s and '70s brought on a period of more war, assassinations, rioting, the brewing Cold War, etc. etc., protest songs flooding the airwaves, blood flooding the streets. An extended, decentralized WWIII. Innocence may have been lost and faith corrupted, but I think there was still a sense of wanting to change the world. After all, what did the flower kids, activists, and rebels want? Peace, equality, and freedom.

In my adolescence, two of my favourite books were Bret Easton Ellis' *Glamorama* and Douglas Coupland's *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*, and, even though I'm not a Gen X'er, I remember relating to the characters' feelings of disconnect and mistrust. The loss of self in a world of identities, the re-evaluation of social norms as people are pushed to the edge or discarded altogether, as they realized humans are disposable, less than zero, and so was culture; remaining intoxicated to avoid the comedown.

Whether disenchanted and nihilistic or pro-active and positive, Gen X'ers felt detached from what sounds like a polarizing, no-holds-barred world. I mean, society was offering them everything new and improved on the one hand, and on the other it was setting up boundaries left and right. The Walkman! MTV! Fitness! Emerging markets! Fast money! Globalization! Counteracted by AIDS, "the war on drugs," Valium, single parents, disposable relationships, self-committed hedonists, shoulder pads and mall pop. The latchkey kids who didn't reject it all (punks!) wanted it all! And they wanted it immediately, maybe because they lacked other things in their lives they felt would enrich them, a large portion growing up in divorced or otherwise "broken" homes, the marketing machine now mechanized and going digital.

When explaining the differences between the Baby Boomers and Generation X, the 1971-born Irish comedian Dylan Moral, a Gen X'r, put it this way: "My parent's generation, the Baby Boomers, the post-war people, they had everything; they had it right, you know? Because they came to sexual maturity in the '60s and the government said, 'Well, what do you want now?' 'Oh, I dunno, how about the pill? Can we get the pill?' They said, 'Sure, there you go. What else is going on?' 'Well, some music?' 'Fine, here's the Beatles; the Stones coming in later this evening. There's the Velvet Underground, Jannis Joplin is just out to lunch, so if you want something to do between now and then I'd grow my hair and fornicate if I were you. If things get slow you could always paint your houses brown and orange and discover the avocado.' And then when it was my generation's turn, when it was our goal to come to sexual maturity, you know, 'What's going on, what do we do now?'… *'Don't fuck anybody or you die*!! Never mind, here comes MC Hammer!' "

As the '90s inched closer to the new millennium, technology boomed, capitalism boomed, youth culture boomed, kids grew older faster (and continue to do so). The Millennials (born roughly 1981-2000) saw the world as it transitioned further away from analog and into digital, from old world order to new world order, from group politics and challenging conventions to identity politics and start-up novelties. We were moving through the last decade of the millennium (not just another century yo!) and that changed how we viewed the world. 2000 was no longer a year from a sci-fi movie.

The first half of the new millennium found many of us entering adulthood, questions popping up. What are you going to study? What do you want to do after you graduate? Are you going to get a Masters Degree? England or America? Corporate career or freelancer? My gosh, I have options! A futuristic, optimistic outlook on the world and all the amazing things young people could achieve. It's 1999 all over again! Then came the big bang of financial meltdowns in 2007 and the rug was pulled out from under everyone's feet like a mean joke.

By the time many of us were out of college the job market was shrinking and, however many degrees we accumulated, a secure job was not guaranteed. Our older siblings, now in their late twenties/early thirties, were having difficulty finding a job. Our parents, many of them not yet at retirement age, were being laid off or their salaries slashed. Our grandparents, "who worked hard to give their kids and grandkids everything because they had nothing," were seeing their pensions cut or diminished to an unfair pittance. How were we going to do it? My peers back home, the "Generation of €700" may not have had Great One battles, junta curfews and Cold War surveillance, but they aren't exactly swimming in opportunities and life now seems more controlled than ever before—even if people have, on paper at least, more freedoms and rights. My generation in Greece has never dreamed of a pension—they think the system will be FUBAR to the point where pensions aren't even a social benefit anymore, they'll be privatized. So young people flee. They go abroad and get more degrees, or take up jobs in other, better off counties. They may not be doing something they love, or even care for, but it pays the bills. Happiness later.

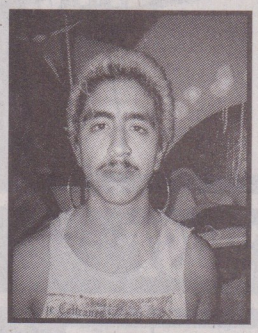
Whereas in the past the "meaning" and "purpose" of life were more often than not handed down to people by family, religion and societal structures, and a small elite had the advantage of an individual identity and history, now we are faced with a new reality. In an increasingly consumer-driven world, where there is no consistent ethical framework, (rise of the individual, ethical egoism, corporations with rights, privatized prisons, the list goes on) it is becoming increasingly easier to define yourself not by your morals, or by what you do, but by the brands you buy ("I drink fair trade coffee"). Mass literacy, the ability to be a "civic-critic," the wider but shallower assimilation of knowledge, the constantly changing narrative, the rapid speed and boundless nature of communication, the assumption that evolution is synonymous with technological expansion—all these things have altered our psychic metabolism and our collective thyroid is going berserk; hypo, hyper, hypo, hyper. The ugliness of recent history, the commercially-motivated noise, the endless chatter and little time for reflection might justify why we have stepped away from long-term perspectives and narrowed our thoughts so they are shrunk down to one single thing, closer to home: ourselves.

So I look back at each generation, wondering how the differences affect history and our personal and professional choices. I'm not entirely sure what I'm going to do with the rest of my life, but the question that troubles me more is what are my peers going to be doing with the rest of *their* lives? The same way generations have their attributes and impact, so do sub/counter-cultures. Punk has had three generations so far, a fourth emerging, and we can, collectively and individually make an impact on society. Young punks: if you could positively change one thing about yourself and your punk scene in this New Year, what would it be? Send thoughts to lydia@maximumrocknroll.com

MRR asks you!

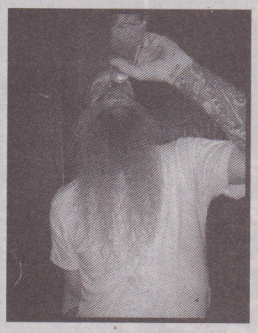
WHAT'S THE SCOOP

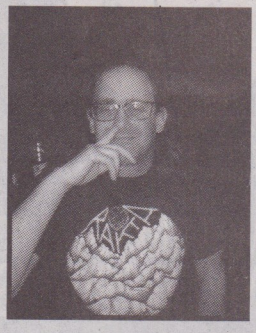
This month's question was, "What is your 2015 punk trend prediction?" Asked at a Freak Vibe show at the Hemlock in San Francisco CA. By Kyle and Rachel.



Anthony, 24, Seattle
Hoop-fucking-earrings.

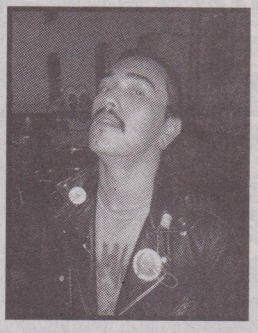
Robert, 42, San Francisco
In 2015 System Of A Down is going to be just as retro as the Clash were in 2002. Think about that...





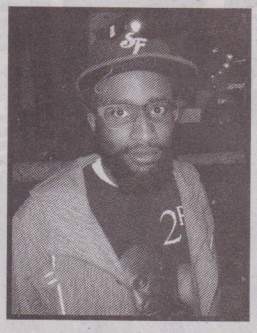
Dan, 32, Oakland
I predict that in 2015 the number of Void cross tattoos will officially surpass the number of Minor Threat sheep tattoos.

Nolan, 24, Seattle
Ear to nose chains!



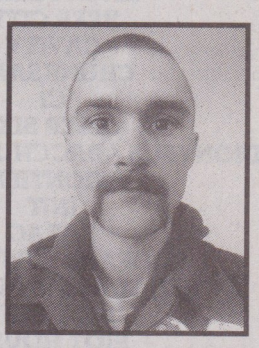
Regina, 23, Richmond
Taylor Swift impersonations and cover bands at Gilman Street.

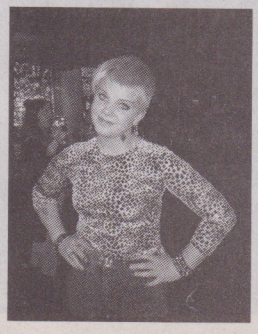
Z, 24, Oakland
I believe it's going to be: poop, boogers, menstrual blood, pee and jizz (lil' swimmers) and farts.



Reeves, 29, San Francisco
My prediction is Lockin' Out style bands will come back into fashion.

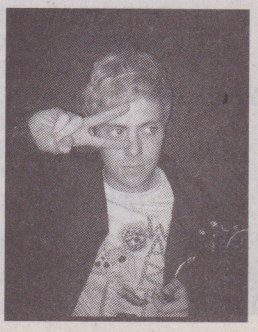
Chad, 1000, Seattle
Everyone is going to be covered in chrome and have hover boards and laser guns.

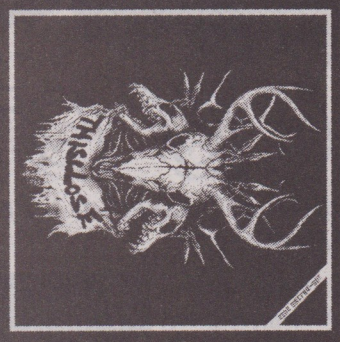




Xtine, 21, Seattle
Spurs, and cowboy hats will replace berets.

Sean, 26, Oakland
Neoprene sock liners, vests being studded with circuitry and the soldering of nipples.





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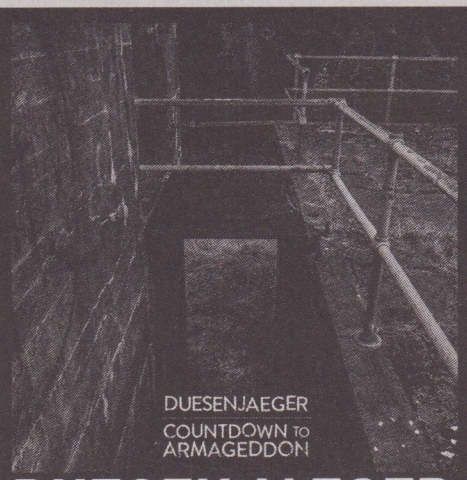

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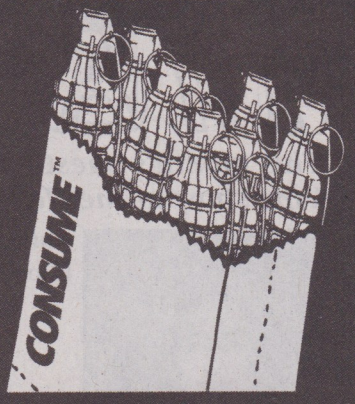

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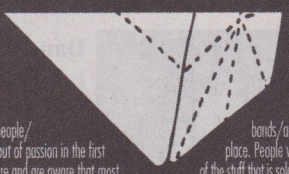

We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING-
IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

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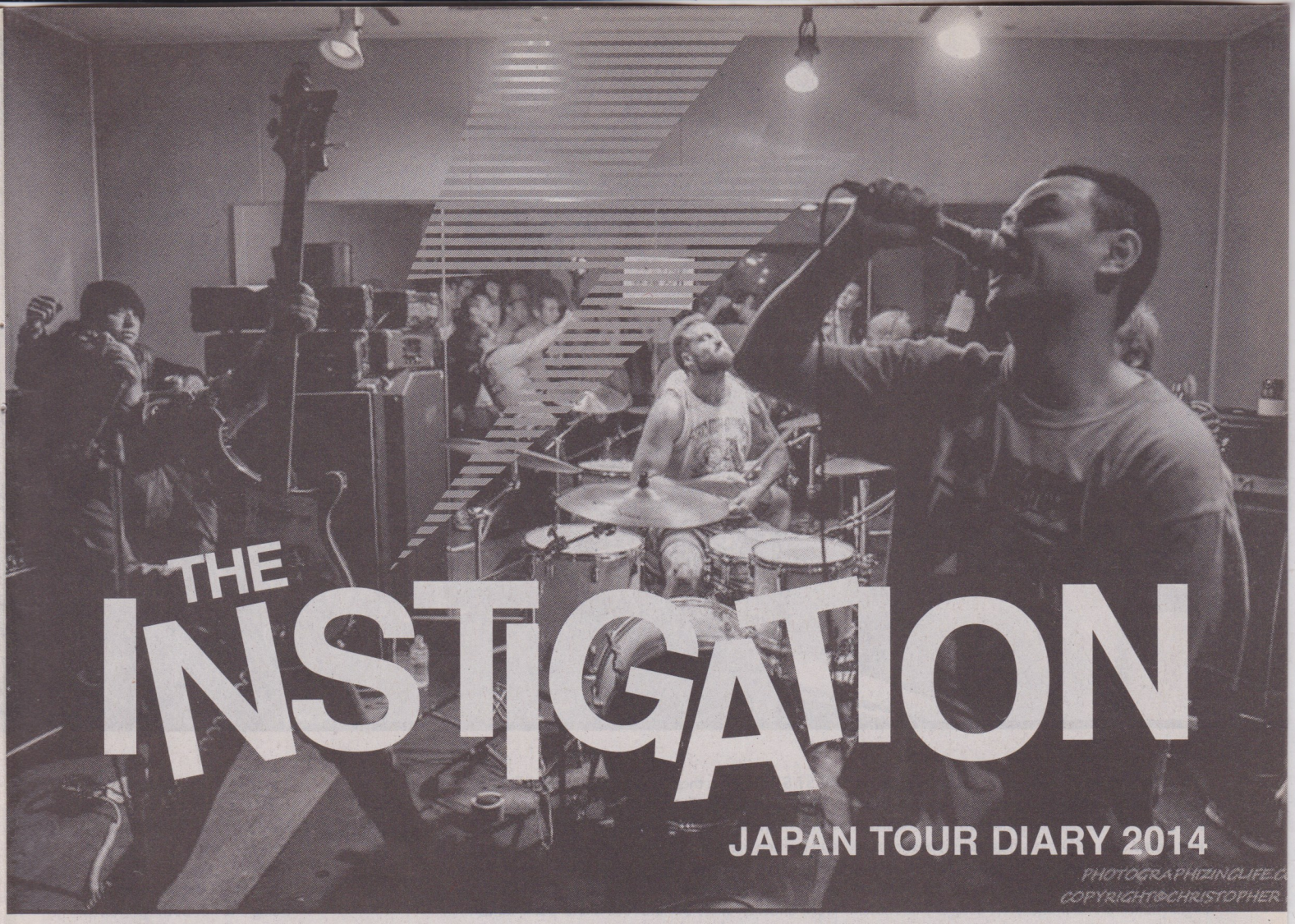


The Instigation formed in Shanghai in middle of summer in 2010. The current members are from diverse backgrounds, consisting of Toshi Knmk on bass, who moved to Tokyo in 2013, but who used to run a non-profit in Shanghai supporting and arranging Chinese tours for DIY garage and punk bands from abroad; Tyler Bow from Canada and Spill Your Guts on drums, who now lives in Shanghai and runs his own bike shop, London-based Simon Cochrane; and their most recent recruit and the person to mix and master all the band's songs, Osaka-based Tommy Fever (aka Tonchan) from Thee Mighty Fevers on guitar. The band is spread across the world, only active when they can all gather in one location at the same time. This time it was Japan. Part I by Simon, Part II by Tyler. Photos provided by the band.

Part I

Day 1: Kansai

I stepped off my fourteen-hour flight to Tokyo and ran to make my connection to Osaka. I thought I'd be taking it alone, but it turned out everyone else had missed their flights that morning and ended up on the same flight as me. Good start.

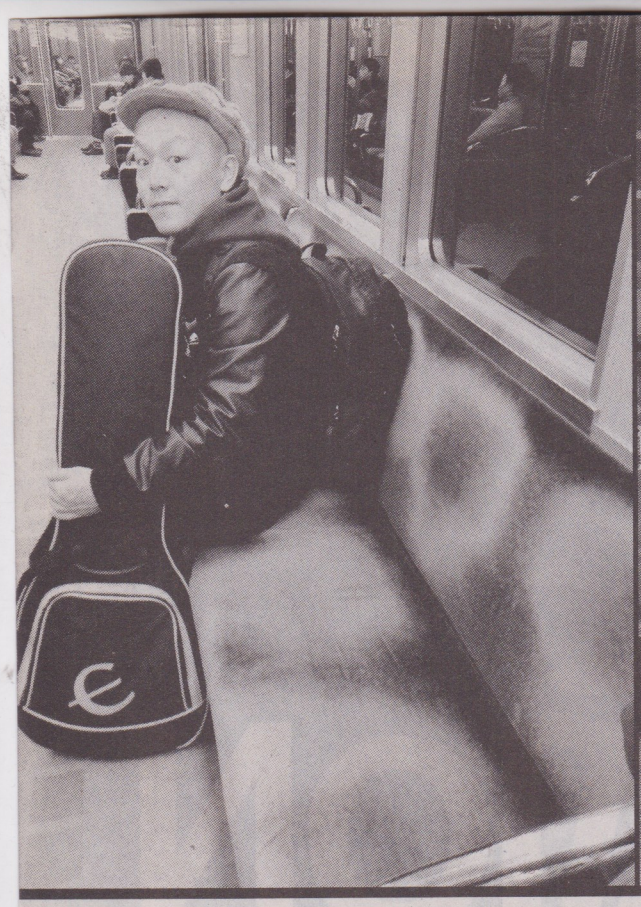
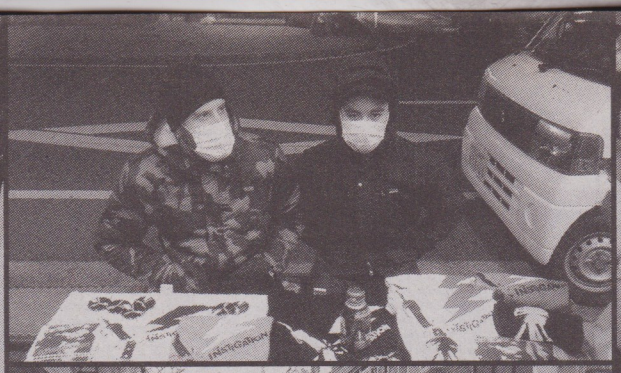
Toshi, the bassist and the nucleus of the INSTIGATION, runs a tight ship. We hadn't been in a band for over a year and we hadn't ever played with our guitarist for this tour, Tonchan of THEE MIGHTY FEVERS. We landed and went straight to a four-hour practice.

Afterwards, we headed to Tonchan's place and crashed on the tatami mats and spent a lot of time with our feet under the little heated table, eating and drinking our way through cheap convenience store sundries and swapping tunes and dumb YouTube videos.

Day 2: Osaka

The next day we headed to Osaka early, in order to squeeze in one last practice, hit the studio to record some vocals, sound check, and play a show—in that order.

After a quick train ride up to Tonchan's mum's place, we hit up Family Mart for some quick eats, a ritual we'd perform every couple of hours for the duration of the trip. Japan has the best convenience stores in the world—buying cheap and tasty snacks and beer is a hassle-free experience, plus, there are vending machines on every street when you aren't in beer-drinking mode (or if you're straightedge).

In under an hour we were in Osaka, hangovers soothed by Masshysteri. I recommended Terrible Feelings to Tonchan and he picked up their record at Time Bomb, one of Osaka's biggest and best record stores. As vinyl nerds already know, Japan is heaven for collectors and completists, but it's not really for bargain hunters. I fall in the latter category so I stuck to the distros.

Practice was only an hour. Tonchan had done a sterling job learning the songs and his guitar playing was the perfect match. We sounded good—maybe better than we ever had. Our drummer Tyler would almost be in tears each time we'd enter a practice space, which were all so clean and well managed, with top-notch equipment and all the beer holders you need to get your shit done. It's a world away from the dirty, dusty, cold and humid underground bunkers he practiced in several times a week with his three bands in Shanghai.

The show was at King Cobra, which is right in the middle of Osaka's young trendy shopping neighborhood, not necessarily where you'd expect to find a two-floor squat. We played downstairs with a bunch of bands on the fast-thrashy-skate punk spectrum, while a pretty heavyweight Japcore line-up featuring NIGHTMARE and ZYANOSE played upstairs where the average age must have been late 30s, if not mid 40s; lots of lifers. The crusty parents who brought their daughter made sure her ear defenders were on right while she nodded to the D-beat. Despite my best intentions, I managed to miss them both.

Our show started with SCOTTISH FOLD. Like a lot of Japanese punk bands, they have obviously played together for a long while, at least ten years. The guys looked to be in their early 40s but were still crankin' out the harder end of skate punk mixed with some crossover style solos. SANSQRUIT played next, a Good Riddance-style/skate punk kinda vibe. BRAVE OUT followed and really nailed the modern youth crew sound—and by "modern," I mean early 2000s. Basically, they sounded like the FIRST STEP, whom they covered along with MINOR THREAT and YOUTH OF TODAY. Standard fare some might say, but done well. I got a kick out of it and it made me wonder why youth crew never took off in China despite being a mainstay in many of the smaller Asian scenes I've seen. The BRONXXX were another twist on late '80s skate punk, kinda RKL meets Charles Bronson. They spent a lot of time bantering with the crowd, which I picked up on none of, although they got plenty of laughs and apparently made a couple digs at the crusties upstairs.

SUPERDUCK came next, who had a Beastie Boys thing going down, albeit slightly updated. One tune sampled Slayer and had kids moshing harder than they had all night. All the locals seemed to love the crowd banter and the lyrics had them all creasing with laughter. There was definitely no feeling that this was at odds with the rest of the show, but it was also pretty clear that the "two MC's and one "DJ" were former hardcore/punk kids. It felt totally DIY and was actually a nice segue into the last couple bands: HOIST, BOYZBOYZBOYZ (yes, that's a real band name…), and us. HOIST were probably my favourite band of the whole evening. Pure Descendents / All worship, but done perfectly thanks to some quality guitar playing by Yakusai "Cocksucker Records" Inoue, who also happened to book the show.

We dedicated "Foreign Moron" to this drunk American dude who kept being a dick throughout the show. Mate we get it, you're a loud drunk American. Thanks. You can leave now. I definitely blanked out a little on-stage, but kids seemed to be into it and we sounded pretty tight considering we'd only racked up five hours of practice with Tonchan in the past two days.

After the show, most people hung out for some drinks and food. We wrapped up around midnight and headed back to Kobe.

Day 3: Okayama

Started the day with an awesome curry for a late breakfast. Curry in Japan is usually less of a curry and more of a thick gravy, and this was somewhere between the two. Being a fan of both curries, as well as cross-culturalism in general, it was a hit with me.

We borrowed a minivan from the drummer from Thee Mighty Fevers (another great dude who was in fine form when we played with them the next evening), and set out for Okayama. The drive took us through some nice mountainous landscapes, which Japan has plenty of. However, upon arriving in Okayama, which I'm told is the home of Japanese denim, it seemed more like a midwestern American town than anything Japanese. Very flat, spread out, and with lots of the familiar mall-brand fast food joints I associate with '80s/'90s America, very different from the hyper-metropolitan façade of Osaka. The city was noticeably quieter and upon arriving at the venue, I wasn't sure what to expect.

When we got through the doors of Pepperland, I was even more confounded after seeing what seemed to be a Salary-man doing spoken word poetry over the top of some recorded free form jazz. Turned out the "festival" was just a line-up of every band, act, or person of interest in town. I wasn't disheartened and relished the chance to see some different sounding bands. Everything was still really DIY. The 50-ish lady owner of the venue ran the door all night and there was an awesome stall selling homemade Okinawan/Mexican food, beers and tequila. It was the perfect setup. I took on merch duties for much of the night and managed to catch a decent indie-emo band with Mascis leanings, called FOLKS, and an all-women twee band called AAPS. They opened their set with a cover of "I Fought the Law" that melted my heart, although I'm not sure that was Strummer's intention! There were a couple

of psychobilly bands that interested my band mates but weren't so much my bag.

We played around 1:00 a.m. and despite being a small venue it was more of a stagey set-up than King Cobra's punk club casualness. I felt weird about small kids being there. I mean, I don't mind ruining people's fun if they know what they're in for, but I'm not so much of a dick to force little kids into listening to our racket.

The rest of the night was spent in front of the venue getting hammered with Marty, the singer from Thee Mighty Fevers, and our new best tour mate, Hentai, aka Chabz Tranzit. This guy plays in a band he described as "real homeless scumcore," which turned out to be a noise band with an actual homeless dude doing vocals. Wow! Everybody check out BLACK SABBETS!

Day 4: Kobe

We woke up fairly late after a heavy night and arriving home late from Okayama the night before. One of Tonchan's friends came over to borrow some money and ended up cooking us a cracking breakfast of eggs and miso soup with tofu after which my new friend Hentai and I went for a walk down to the harbor, an activity for local couples (or so I was told), and then for some gy□za in Chinatown, apparently the biggest in Japan.

Kobe, much like Fukuoka, is really nice. Small enough to feel quiet and have a tight-knit scene, but large enough and well connected enough to not feel too isolated. Not to mention you're surrounded by huge green mountain ranges and you're by the sea—a really refreshing landscape coming in from London.

That evening was New Year's Eve. I was starting to feel pretty run down and went back to catch some sleep before the show, which Tonchan had organized. It was a drunken but extremely fun night. All the bands were local with the bill leaning a little more to the garage-y side of things, especially with THEE MIGHTY FEVERS headlining the show. When I arrived, CONCRETE WAVES were already halfway through their set. They nail the early '80s West Coast look and aesthetic hard. I had met the singer in Osaka on the first night and he told me they sounded like ANGRY SAMOANS, but I'd say it was probably closer to VOM. Either way, it was great to watch, with the singer throwing some MC5 style shapes for added effect. FRUIT IN JELLY, an almost all-girl, new wave band dressed as Japanese high-schoolers doing live skits in between songs. A proper head-scratcher for me but I guess this is what's defined as "Kawaii," which means cute, loveable or adorable. DEAD VIKINGS played next. They had played in Shanghai in 2010 at the first INSTIGATION show with the original singer, Dave. A pretty solid garage band, they probably sound like HELLACOPTERS or one of those Burning Heart bands, but at this point I was doing shots of snake whiskey at the bar near the venue with Tyler. It was New Year's Eve for god sake!

BAIT ONES, who share two-thirds of FRUIT IN JELLY, saw in the New Year. The singer wore a leopard print onesie and high-heels and had poured a whole bottle of red wine down himself by their third song. I guess it was meant to go with their Cramps worshipping, but I just thought it was slippery. Kids seemed to really dig them though and you could tell that their sound had definitely influenced the younger bands. Things were getting pretty wild now. Loads of beer spilt and rockabilly dudes regulating the slippery dance floor while eating udon, a Japanese New Year tradition. The udon eating that is, not the slam dancing. It was also about this time I realized how drunk Tonchan was, right before he was set to play with both us and the FEVERS. Beyond the first song, I don't think we managed to make it through the rest of the set without someone falling on their arse. Despite a decent-sized chunk of the original 100 or so kids already being too wasted to stand, a couple were still in good New Year spirits, amplified by the booze-soaked floor. I was pretty blown away by how good Tonchan still was, considering how much he'd had to drink, but his second set with the FEVERS really did him in. That being said, they were still great to watch! Any time a drum kit needs to be pieced together four times during one band's set, I'd say that it got pretty wild. I don't listen to too much garage, but their fuckin' great rock'n'roll definitely helped me get over my post-tour hangover when I got back to the UK.

The only casualty was Tonchan's guitar head, which he somehow managed to snap in half. Not pretty. Unbelievably he kept raging on for the next couple of hours and even got up for work at 8:30 the next morning!

After the show Tyler, Jankee, Hentai and I ended up at the temple to check out local festivities and get some New Year blessings. The centre of Kobe was heaving at 4:00 a.m. with everyone out buying street food and alms at the temple. A completely new experience for me.

Day 5: Osaka

The morning after was typically slow moving, with just enough momentum to get some laundry done, send some emails, track down Tonchan and prepare for the following day's trip up to Tokyo.

Part II
Day 6: Osaka / Tokyo

We were up at the crack of dawn, pounding silky black cans of coffee and on a bus headed for the Osaka Airport when it hit me that half the tour was over. Three shows down, three to go, and two of them in Tokyo no less. We arrived at the airport around

10 a.m., grabbed a quick double-beef, triple-bacon, quadruple-cheese McMuffin (a Japanese specialty), and waited to board the plane. We travel pretty damn light. The beauty of touring in Japan, and most of Asia, is that you only have to bring your guitars, pedals, chords and whatever the drummer wants to personally use. For me, that meant a bag full of drumsticks and my single kick pedal. Touring has never been this easy.

We landed in Tokyo just after lunchtime. It was surprisingly much warmer than down South. We wore T-shirts while we sipped cans of beer on Toshi and Sarah's porch at their place just outside the city center. The area is really nice, lots of great places to eat and tons of wicked grocery markets for all the home cooks out there. We had dinner with a friend in town from London, knocked back a couple of pints of Asahi, watched a little bit of Alien and were in bed early.

Everyone had really been looking forward to today. I mean, come on! It's fucking Tokyo! How could it not be good? We had a really early sound check, so Simon and I headed into the city to grab lunch with his friends. One of them was still a bit under the weather from the previous night's Asahis, so they were running late. They had given us directions where to meet; we figured we could wing it and find them, no problem. Wrong. Simon and I ended up spending an hour wandering the red light district, and staring at people playing Pachinko—which I totally should have done, but was afraid that, once I started, my life would be over and I'd never leave Japan. After roaming back to the Metro, we managed to meet up with his friends and grab a quick bite to eat.

We took the subway back to the venue, Otsuka Meets, which was in a super weird location. It was right in the middle of this beautiful little residential area, in the basement of a small, four-story apartment building. It was basically a small bomb shelter, with a mini bar and just enough room to fit 50 people inside. Tonchan decided that he needed to pick up some kind of distortion pedal for his guitar, since he had broken his prized Gibson in Osaka, and his backup just didn't have the same vibe.

We cruised a few music stores. None of them sold anything drum-related—what a bummer! It was basically guitar heaven, though. Floors upon floors of what I can only imagine are some of the rarest and most difficult to find guitars in the world. That's Japan for you, always taking it one step further, making everything that much more awesome.

Back at the venue, the first band, N6, was way heavier than I was expecting. Although, I don't really know what I was expecting since all the bands we've played with so far had been all over the map. They were tight, as all Japanese bands are, and loud. The crowd really seemed to dig them. I was towering in the back and after their set the show organizer came up and introduced himself to me. I guess I'm pretty easy to spot, since I was the only white dude at any of the shows, with a big red beard. He seemed really nice, offered to buy me a beer, and that was pretty much the extent of our conversation. I can't speak any Japanese, so conversations were limited. DE-CULTURES, who played fourth, were also really good. They had much more of a garage-rock feel than N6. By the time the fifth band, SQUARE THE CIRCLE, went on, I could tell that the crowd was starting to loosen up a bit. They definitely seemed to be the local favorites on the bill and they didn't disappoint! Super grindcore with a touch of '80s punk, they were fast and the burly lookin' singer was on point with high-pitched throat screams. I just wish they had played a bit longer. Their set only ran about twenty minutes. The band just before us, GROANING GROOVE, was my favorite of that night, hands down. It was pretty easy to tell, based on the lead singer's MOTÖRHEAD T-shirt and camo/cargo pants that these guys meant business. You know those kamikaze cartoons that make all warriors look really scary and psychotic? Their singer had the same facial expression during the entire set. The dude's mouth was so fucking huge! It was like he was eating the microphone. Not to mention their songs ruled. I tried picking up some of their merch, but sadly nothing fit me. Do check them out though—so, so awesome.

We went on last and blasted through our set. Thanks to Tonchan, it's pretty much all blastbeats for me now, and I love it. I had forgotten that we'd already been drinking for the last ten hours, and by the time our set was over I was pretty smashed. Thankfully though I wasn't the only one. The singer from COMMUNICATES was in way worse shape than me. After they turned the house lights on, he stood on stage and did stand up comedy for a good 30 minutes. I have no idea what was said, but I laughed along with everyone else. At the end of his skit, he stumbled off the stage, took off his pants and dared somebody to kick him in the dick as hard as they could. Why? I still have no idea. He stood there for about five minutes with his dick hanging out, until a girl came over and made sure he'd never have kids again. Japan, you never stop amazing me.

The subway closes at midnight, and it wasn't until 11:50 p.m. that we realized we had to dash. We grabbed our gear, sprinted to the metro stop, and somehow got on the last train. About five minutes in, I asked Toshi how long the ride back was, to which he responded, "Oh, maybe 30 minutes." Fuck. I had to pee, and didn't have time to catch a bathroom on the way over. If this had been any another country, I would have considered peeing somewhere on the metro, but not in Japan. Toshi was in just as much pain as me, and for 25 minutes Tonchan and Simon just laughed at us as we rolled on the floor in pain. When we finally got to our stop, Toshi dropped his gear and we sprinted for the bathrooms. I'm pretty sure I peed a little bit in my pants before I hit the urinals, but who cares? It was the most glorious pee of my life.

A quick midnight snack at the local ramen joint and we were back in bed, sound asleep.

Toshi had booked us a rental van so that we could drive to Mito, two hours outside of Tokyo. Lucky for us, the rental shop was literally right across the street from his apartment, so we all grabbed our backpacks and hopped into the Japanese minivan. With all the CDs we'd picked up along the way, we had more than enough music for the three-hour journey.

The plan was to meet the guys from COMMUNICATES halfway at a gas station pit stop. The cafeteria at the rest stop was better than most four-star restaurants in North America, and better than anything I can eat in China for sure! Simon and I were wandering around like lost school kids in a candy shop. Which curry were we going to get? Which ramen? Which fried pork chop? Screw it, one of everything please! We stuffed our faces, filled our pockets with canned coffee and hopped back into the van.

For the first time, we were ahead of schedule. Rolling into Mito felt like driving into a town in North America, complete with strip malls, Walmarts and fast food joints lining the block. However, in this case those strip malls and Walmarts were actually the world's best vintage shops. Sarah runs an online shop that sells vintage Japanese clothing, so we took the extra two hours and spent time roaming the kilometer-long vintage shop. Simon headed straight for the Polo section, Tonchan for the aviation section, Sarah to the dresses and skirts section, and I just kept trying to find something that would fit me. After what felt like an entire day, we left with bags and bags of swag. I was stoked to have found a vintage gentleman's cap that wouldn't leave my head for the rest of the tour.

We arrived at the venue just as the sun was setting. It's called Ninety East and is the benchmark for isolated venues in Japan. It looks like a small barn in the middle of a parking lot, where kids obviously have tailgate parties after the show. It holds about 100 people at maximum capacity, has a small bar, and a decent PA system.

The bill was small, but we were all super excited to see COMMUNICATES and the NOVICE play. For those unfamiliar with the NOVICE, they are a post-punk band fronted by Jeff Burke of the Marked Men. They absolutely killed it! I think they were my favourite band I saw in Japan. Jeff's vocals were the perfect balance for thrashy garage rock guitar riffs and pounding drum beats. Totally awesome!

COMMUNICATES put on an amazing show and really raised the bar for the night. Their drummer is a madman! So fast and super powerful. By the time we got up to play we were all tired but ready to have a good time. I think somewhere around the fourth song in our set Simon smacked his head on Toshi's bass and started bleeding everywhere. From my point of view, behind the drum kit, it looked a lot worse than it probably was, but he rolled with it continuing to scream while blood poured down his face. The night finished with casual hangouts, a couple drinks and the exchange of merch between the bands. We then packed ourselves back into the rental van and headed back to Tokyo for what would be our last show of the tour.

The final countdown, as they say. The biggest and most jam-packed show of the tour, and the one we had all been looking forward to the most. The guys from COMMUNICATES were running this show themselves and had rented out a room at Asagaya Studio Zot, which is a jam hall/recording studio in downtown Tokyo. They rammed the bill with all kinds of bands, ranging from hardcore to punk rock to indie rock to some genres I've never heard of, like power-speed-drunk. Fucking sweet.

To this day, I have never seen Toshi so amped in my entire life. I've known him for five years, and in all those years I've seen him puke, bite people, punch people and be blackout-wasted, but nothing compared to the Toshi-animal that showed up to play at Studio Zot. We were slotted to play somewhere near the end of the show and it was looking to be a really long day. We all took the metro over from Toshi's house after noon, and were there for the duration of the show, until almost midnight!

Toshi really wanted to go out with a bang, so along the way he bought about twenty Japanese energy drinks. He kept offering them to Simon and me, but we would politely decline and stick to our Suntory Malt beers.

By the time we had to play, Toshi had finished all of the energy drinks himself, along with a six-pack of beer and who knows what other kind of alcohol. He was on fire. We loaded our gear into the super-tiny jam room, set it all up, and then close to 70 people rammed themselves inside for what would end up being the best show of the whole tour. An experience I will never forget.

Two songs into our set and stuff is already breaking left and right. The PA speakers are falling over because Tonchan is high kicking off the kick drum and landing into amps, the drum kit is falling apart because drunk Japanese guys keep coming over and smashing their heads on the cymbals, and the crowd is loving every minute of it. Halfway into the set comes the single moment that made everything worth it. MoshiToshi makes his debut appearance for the first time ever. Toshi throws his bass onto the ground, looks drunkenly at the crowd and then just charges them and spears the first person in his way. He then runs back to the drum kit, flies off the kick drum hitting Tonchan in the head, all the while another guy has picked up his bass and is filling in on the song. The coolest thing I have seen all year, and probably the coolest thing I will see in all my coming years of playing shows.

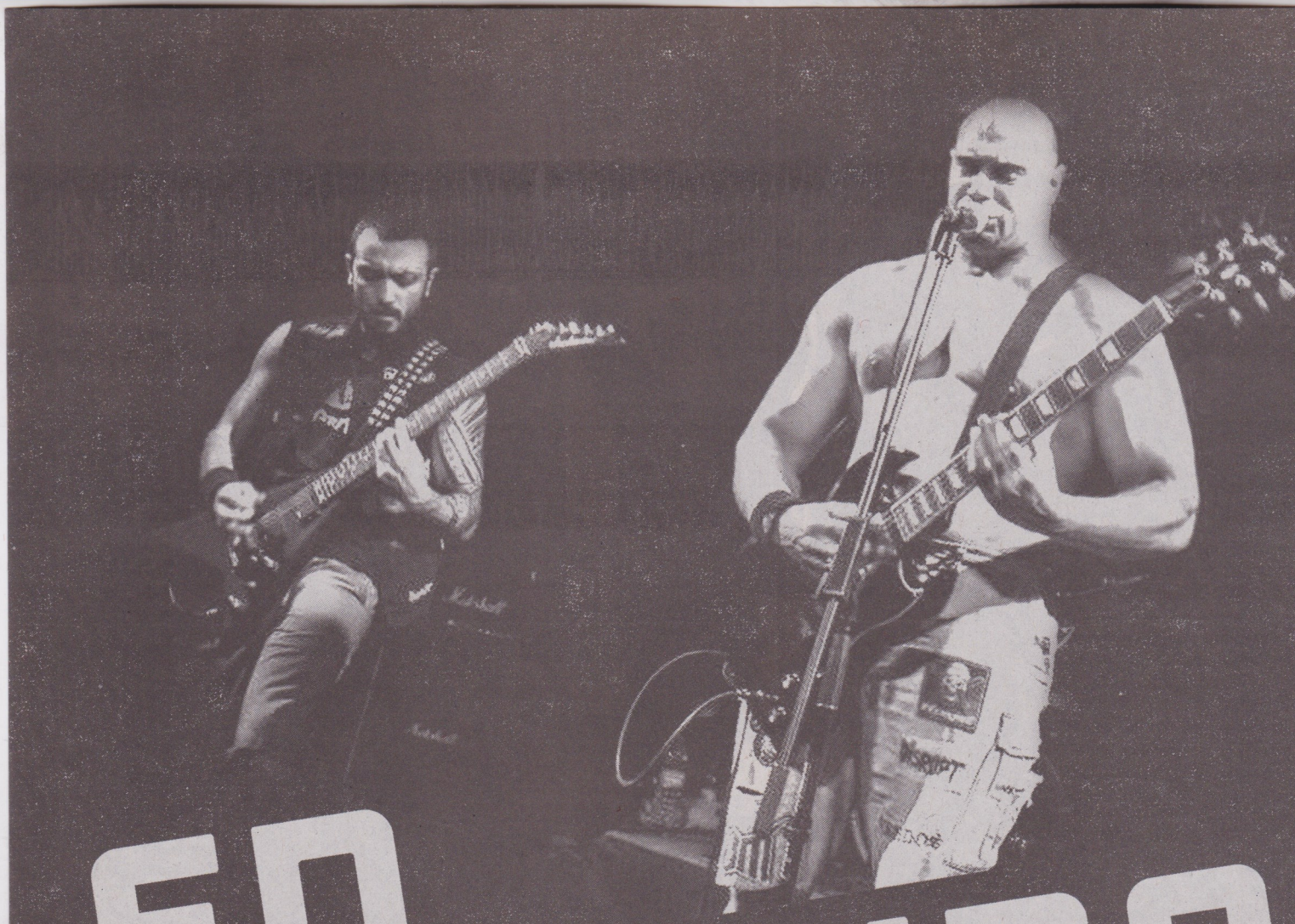
The moment our set was over was both the happiest and one of the saddest moments for me in the last few years. On one hand I couldn't believe how amazing the crowd and all of Japan was to us. On the other hand, I was so sad to think that in just a few days I would be flying home to China and wouldn't get to see these guys for at least another year. With mixed emotions, we partied out the night watching the rest of the bands, then helped clean up the venue and finish all the beers.

As we were leaving, the guys from COMMUNICATES told us we all had to join in for a traditional Japanese dinner. Man, I couldn't be more stoked! They took us to a small hole-in-the-wall restaurant not far from the jam studio. Over 30 of us packed into the upstairs room and chowed down on Japanese delicacies. I did the best I could to talk with everyone and personally thank everyone for what an amazing time we all had, but should anyone be reading this again… Thank you for everything! That night we drank, laughed, took pictures and just kept it awesome.

Day 9: Tokyo

Today we said our goodbyes. To Tonchan, as he returns to Kobe. To Simon, as he returns to England. And to me, as I fly back to Shanghai. Out of all the hundreds of shows, in countries all over the world that I've been privileged enough to play in, this tour in Japan was my favorite. Hands down. I'd recommend Japan to everyone, even if it's not to play music. Today is not the end of the INSTIGATION, but just another chapter in what has been the story of a truly trans-national band just looking to have fun. Europe, see you next summer? I hope so.

Listen to the Instigation at theinstigation.bandcamp.com.



EN PSYCHRO

Εν Ψυχρω (En Psychro) play raging D-beat hardcore punk all the way from Nicosia, Cyprus. For any readers out there for whom geographical knowledge of this part of the world is not a strong point, Cyprus is a small island at the easternmost point of the Mediterranean Sea, neighboring Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Egypt. Given its strategic position nestled between Europe, Africa and the Middle East, it has fallen victim to many invasions and occupations over the centuries, most recently from Britain and Turkey, who have occupied the northern part of the island since 1974. The walled city of Nicosia is the world's last divided capital, where a passport is necessary to walk between the Greek Cypriot south and the Turkish occupied north. Military service is compulsory for all young men on both sides. In the south, service requires two years, or three if you are a conscientious objector, in which case you don't have to hold a gun but have to do an extra year as a cook or medic. There is a military presence at all checkpoints scattered throughout the "Green Line," a United Nations buffer zone that runs across the island dividing the north and south. Britain still has two air force bases in the south, lingering scars that colonialism inflicted on the landscape. Doom and gloom aside, it's a beautiful island steeped in ancient culture and history, where carob trees and thyme grow wild and basil is the Cypriot answer to a box hedge. I was fortunate enough to visit earlier this year and managed to get in touch with En Psychro, who, to the best of my knowledge, are one of two current DIY punk bands on the island. Many thanks to Stephanos for translating this interview from Greek to English and to Marios for all the stuff from his distro. Introduction and interview by Cameron Ross. Photos provoded by the band.

En Psychro is:
George: Vocals/Guitar
Marios: Bass
Stephanos: Guitar/Vocals
Achilles: Drums/Vocals

MRR: Can you give us a short history of the band?

Hello. The band's been together since the summer of 2011, the result of long-lasting friendships among the four of us. We always wanted to form our own band. During that time, George had already been playing in Downward Spiral (and still is), and the rest of us were jamming together. We combined forces and formed En Psychro (which translates to "In Cold Blood").

MRR: Have you ever played a gig in one of the many open tombs, catacombs, or necropolises found on the island?

No, we haven't actually. We have however played within the Venetian walls that surround the old city of Nicosia and in the Buyuk Han Yani in the occupied areas. Both date from the 16th century AD. In regards to playing gigs in necropolises, we imagine that the Cyprus government has them under strict surveillance and we doubt that they'd allow a radical band like ours to "desecrate" these places. But you never know, right?

MRR: Are there many other bands in Cyprus? Are they all in Nicosia or are there some in smaller towns? Do any touring bands ever come over?

There are quite a few local bands within the spectrum of extreme music, but most of them play metal. They are spread out throughout the island's towns. Unlike in previous decades, touring bands come to Cyprus to play gigs and things are much better in that respect, and Cyprus is slowly but steadily getting into the worldwide extreme sound list.

MRR: I was only in Cyprus for 20 minutes before we drove past a demonstration of Greek Cypriot nationalists. I noticed that there was a lot of Nazi graffiti as well as anarchist and antifa graffiti around Nicosia and the rest of the island. Is the far right much of a threat here and do you ever have encounters with them?

You are obviously referring to a demonstration organized by the National People's Front (ΕΛΑΜ in Greek, or NPF in English) supporters. They maintain relations with the fascist/neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn from Greece, which they consider a "brotherly movement." The Nazi graffiti, as well as the anarchist graffiti you noticed, are everywhere and are a sign of conflict among Cypriot youth, as portrayed on the walls of every city. During the past decade, we have witnessed a rapid increase in fascist activity: bullying, beatings, damage to properties, and threats, as well as psychological and verbal violence against Turkish Cypriots, immigrant workers, antifascists, outcasts, and members of the queer community. There have been conflicts between antifascists and fascists, with both sides suffering losses. In addition, the destruction, looting and despoilment of monuments and buildings of the common cultural inheritance of Cyprus are common occurrences nowadays.

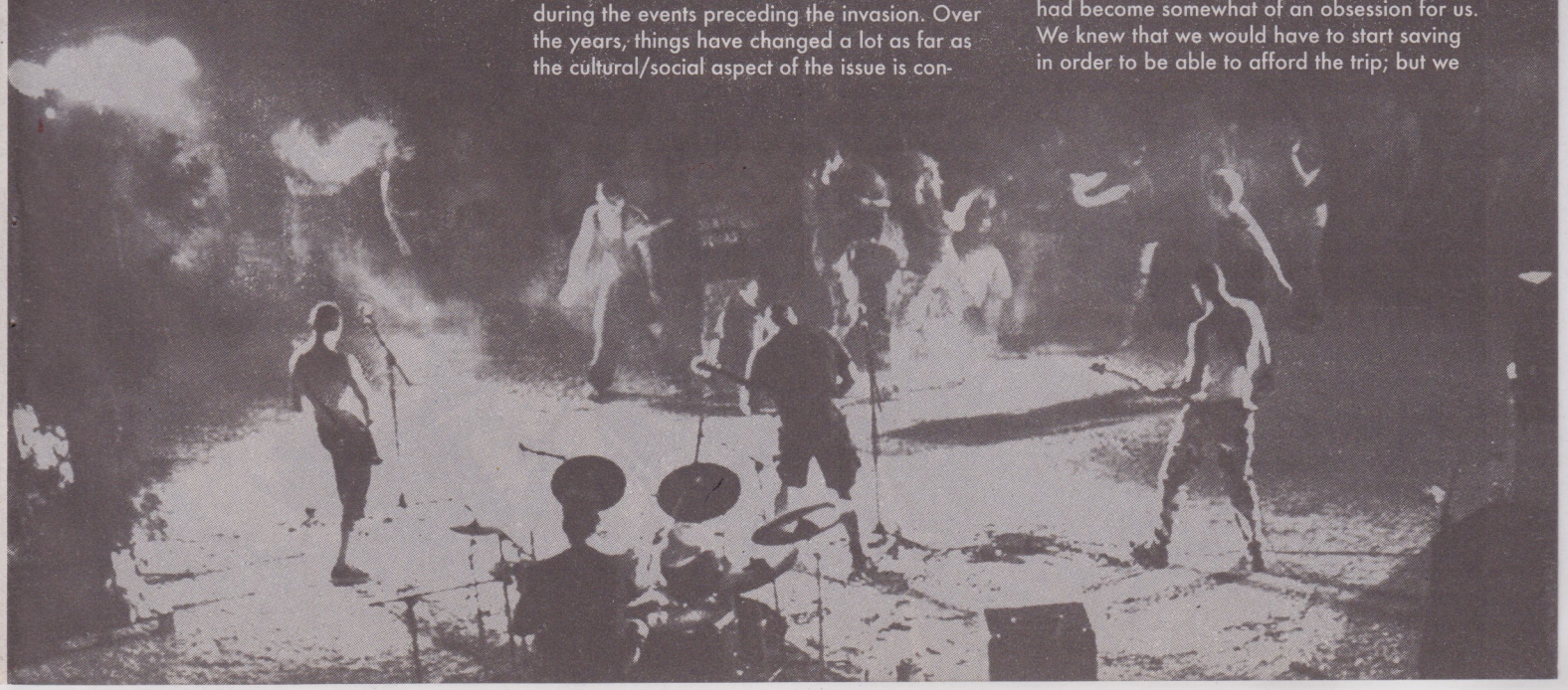
MRR: Can you tell us a little bit about the history of the Turkish occupation in the northern part of the island? How is the relationship between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots? Were any of your families involved in the conflict?

Obviously, due to the fact that we hadn't yet been born yet, we can't really talk about past times or regurgitate other people's stories regarding the issue of occupation. Both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have suffered because of the occupation. In our case, the mother of one of the guys is a refugee, having been forced to abandon her family house and relocate to Nicosia to start her life all over again, and his father lost one of his best friends during the events preceding the invasion. Over the years, things have changed a lot as far as the cultural/social aspect of the issue is concerned. We do remember the demonstrations against the occupation in the '90s, the marches to the barricades which sometimes were drowned in blood, and the extreme repression that was exercised. The barricades were opened in 2003 and every citizen of the Republic of Cyprus could visit the occupied areas for as long and as frequently as they wanted by presenting their national ID and paying some sort of insurance for the vehicle they would travel in. Since then, a large number of Cypriots have visited the occupied areas, each for their own reasons and purposes.

The only thing that hasn't changed throughout time is the military presence on the entire island. The green line that divides the island is filled with manned outposts, pillboxes and, in some areas, minefields. In regards to an opinion on the relationships between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and the occupation as a whole, one can conclude that it differs from one person to another. As a band, we have Turkish Cypriot friends who share the same opinions and visions: demilitarization of the island, self-determination, and peaceful co-existence. Our friends tell us the majority of Turkish Cypriots wish for the same things, in contrast to the settlers who are still dependent on Turkey and who, of course, benefit from the current division. The Greek Cypriot nationalists, on the other hand, are still stuck on the old notion of the annexation of Cyprus to Greece and the removal of any non-Greek speaking population from the island. This is the general picture (more or less) of the Turkish occupation. There are of course other types of occupation from the NATO armed forces, American and British garrisons, and radars spread out through the mountains of the non-occupied areas.

MRR: You had to pull out of playing at Obscene Extreme Festival because of the Cyprus banking crisis. What happened and how has that affected everyday life here?

Our participation at OEF 2013 was confirmed in January 2013 and we were very excited. It had become somewhat of an obsession for us. We knew that we would have to start saving in order to be able to afford the trip; but we



honestly did not mind one bit. Two months after that, the economy of Cyprus fell apart. The order was given for a deposits haircut as part of the island's bailout strategy. Bank accounts were frozen and no transactions were allowed. This went on for months. One of the island's biggest banks collapsed, and this has had a domino effect on all of us, on our bank accounts, jobs, etc. The system was desperately seeking cash from the people in order to repay its own debts and mistakes. We all sat down and did our calculations, and we could not afford the trip. Everything had changed overnight. Since then, unemployment has reached 40% and up until this day we survive on the fat of years past.

MRR: Does Cyprus have much of a punk history? Any old bands worth checking out?

Yes, there is a punk history in Cyprus—and of course it's worth checking out! The first band was Aposynthesis. They formed in November 1992 and played hardcore punk with political lyrics in Greek. The band members were Xenios Zittes (vocals), Harris Kynigos (bass and vocals), George Heraklides (drums), and George Karakasian (guitar). Unfortunately, the only studio recording that exists is the song "Thanatophobia" (from the compilation CD Slave to Convention – A Tribute to Doom). There are a few unofficial recordings from that era from rehearsals and gigs and there are a couple of videos on YouTube from gigs back from 1993 and 1996. The song "Stratos" ("Army") was re-recorded by us and is included on our four-way split.

In 1996, a new band was formed called Nuclear Mutants. The band consisted of Eva (vocals), Harris Kynigos (bass), Kypros Karaviotis (guitar), and Yiannis (Harris' brother) on drums. They played melodic hardcore/metal punk with female vocals. It was raw and decadent like the good old days. They released a demo tape called Welcome to Reality in the summer of 1997.

At the end of the 1990s, Lost Existence was formed. Its members were Harris K. (vocals), Simos (bass), Athos Eliades (guitar), and Yiannis K. (drums). They mostly played cover songs from Greek punk bands from the '80s and early '90s and a couple of their own songs at local gigs.

After that, Within The Walls formed in 2005. They played hardcore punk with obvious metal influences and political lyrics in Greek. The members were "Vocalist 1" (vocals), George K. (guitar, vocals), Punkunin Marios (bass, vocals), and George P. (drums). They released a self-titled album in 2008, which contains twelve songs along with a 32-page pamphlet (lyrics translated into English, articles, etc.). They took part in the Two Days of Organizing Our Sound Festival at the historical Villa Amalias squat in January 2007, which was held for the purpose of raising money to help Matsaggou Squat in Volos, Greece. Back home, they organized a two-day DIY music festival at Arsinois 5 in Nicosia, which was then a self-managed place. Hasma from Greece also participated in that event.

MRR: What is the best and worst thing about being a punk band from Cyprus?

Well, the best thing is that you look like the worst thing they could have. The worst thing is that, in the end, you are the best thing they could have. We give a voice to a lot of issues through the band, and music is the best medium to use if you want to be heard.

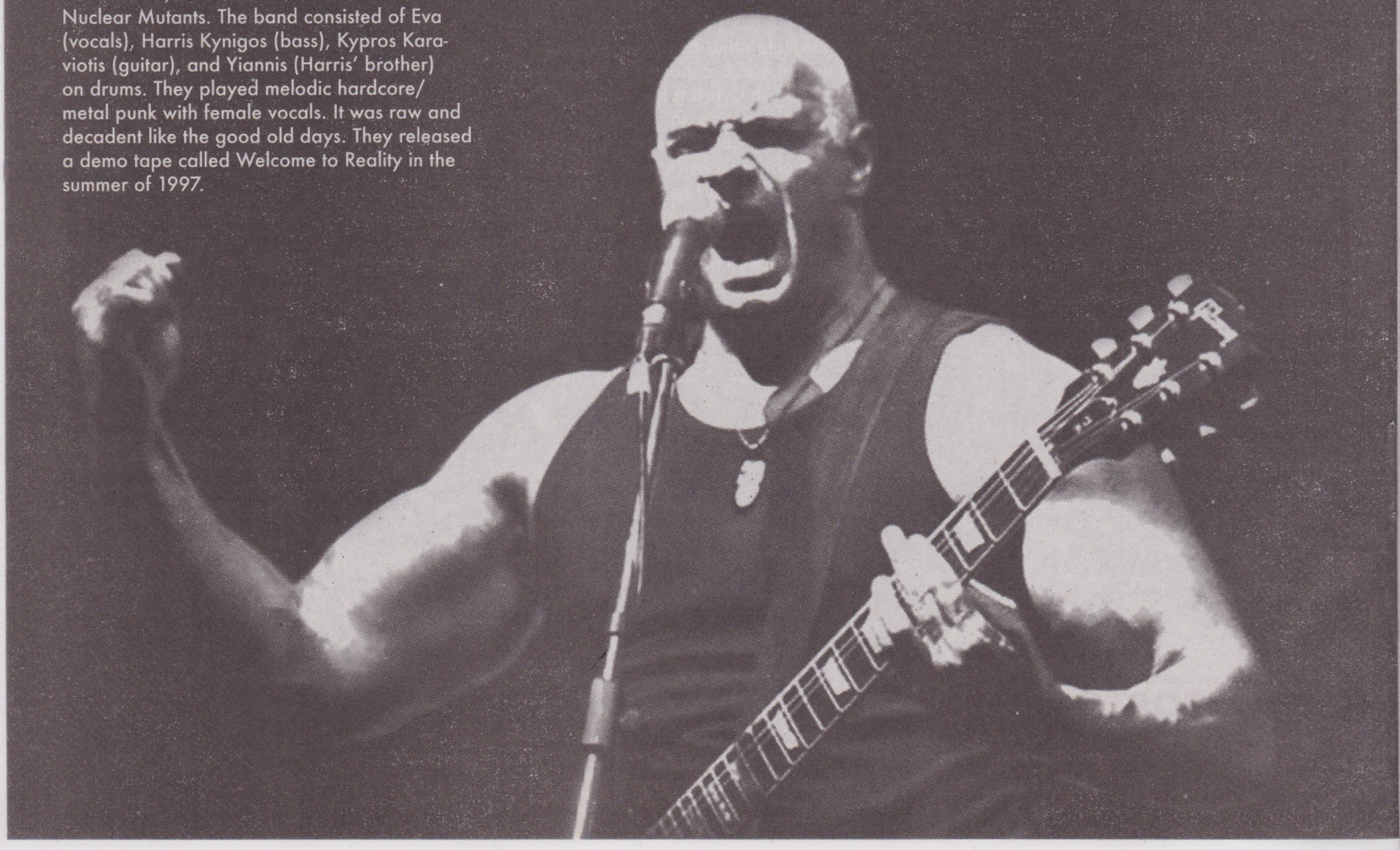
MRR: What do you all do for a job? Do you have to work or can you get money from the state like in other European countries?

Two of us have jobs, and the other two work whenever they find something, but mostly remain unemployed. No one gets any help from the government. This is a good time to state that the Cypriot government does not provide any sort of funding to musicians.

MRR: Thanks for taking the time to do the interview! Anything you want to add?

We thank you for giving us the opportunity to present our band to readers, as well as giving us the medium through which we can give the world a general picture of what's been going on in Cyprus the past few decades. We have just completed our first full-length album Faceless Masses, and are currently looking for labels that might be interested in helping release it. We are going to hit the road again and try to play as many gigs as possible to promote it. We really want to establish connections with people and bands throughout the world because we firmly believe that borders and long distances cannot restrain music.

Stay up to date with En Psychro at ensychro.bandcamp.com or enspychro.blogspot.com. Get in touch with the band at enpsychro@gmail.com and check out Cypriot distro First of the Mohicans at discyprus.blogspot.com.



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still burn LP

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RED SCARE

It takes a lot of hard work, dedication and passion to keep any independent project running and to do so for ten years shows a commitment to contributing to the punk community. No gimmicks, no flash in the pan "next big thing!" Ten years doing what you love and helping bands make music means you've stuck around when others have come and gone. It means rolling with the punches and having a sense of humor about it all.

Red Scare Industries started as a bedroom label in San Francisco before relocating to Chicago, developing a strong and diverse roster of bands along the way. The person behind all this, Tobias Jeg, has stayed true to his aims and ideals to help bands and their music while also ensuring they have a good time along the way. In Red Scare's 10th year Toby, the bands, and the community who have helped build the label plan to collectively high-five and party in celebration of this milestone (while doing their best to avoid blowing too much smoke up each other's asses). Introduction and interview by Justin George. Photos provided by Marc Gaertner, Patrick Houdek and the label.

MRR: Ten years of existence! What for you is the defining moment or achievement of the label? Yes, you can only pick one.

Ha, "achievement?!" Question is, is there even one to pick? I was on tour in England selling merch for the Lawrence Arms and we turned on the TV and BBC was playing a Menzingers song from their record we put out. The album wasn't even out yet and they were an unknown band, so that was pretty cool. They started to blow up after that.

MRR: Ten years of independent existence is always an achievement. You were already working with a label (Fat Wreck Chords) when you started Red Scare. Was that an important motivation to go do it yourself? To be more directly responsible for an album's existence or a band being heard?

You always want to see some results. And that's what our role is: help bands be heard. Because I had worked at a "big" punk label, I kinda knew what I wanted and how to get that done. With that came some expectations, but all the bands know at the end of the day that we're a small operation and we all do the best we can.

MRR: What have been some of the challenges in remaining independent and staying alive for a decade now?

Well, for better or worse, punk rock isn't viable like it was in the '90s, so it's come back to the DIY world and mailorder and having a more personal relationship with the listeners and audience. I like that, but because the "economy" is poor and the resources are limited, we have trouble with distributors. We've had two distros die on us and a *lot* of labels and bands got hurt by that. Gone are the days of Mordam and their sturdy punk rock business approach, and that really sucks, but we soldier on.

MRR: You've mentioned in the past that there are plenty of punk labels releasing records and that we don't necessarily need more, but rather, we need more people getting involved in other aspects of the "biz," such as the distro side of things. Do you still see that as an area of need within the punk music community? How does that compare to self-releasing and websites that make the music directly available?

I think Bishops Green was just talking about this in their *MRR* interview. I'm paraphrasing, but they basically said if you wanna do more, get involved. You don't have to start a band (most people shouldn't!), but if nothing else, get in the crowd and sing along. I love that sentiment. Everyone has a place if you want to do more than just listen to the music. As for specifics, I think distro is a lost cause because people don't buy enough physical products anymore, but there's definitely a need for people to book shows and promote them.

MRR: How has your approach to running the label changed over that time?

I've been consistently late, stupid, and lucky these past 10 years.

MRR: So there's something to be said for consistency then? It's hard work releasing records—has it gotten easier by now, 10 years into it?

Vinyl takes three times as long to make nowadays thanks to collectors and other various dipshits taking a sudden interest in the format. Every record store is *full* of used copies of the Doors on vinyl, but for some reason major labels are doing all sorts of reissues that are clogging up the last few presses left in the country. That shit takes forever to make now and it's a real nuisance.

MRR: Over the last decade the label has accrued a diverse roster of artists and bands. What was the vision for the label starting out and how does it compare to today?

I was originally inspired by leftist bands like Propagandhi and the Dead Kennedys. Both those bands also spawned labels too, coincidentally. Not all Red Scare bands are political in nature, but that's because at some point you need to put the music first. In a perfect world, they make great tunes and have a great message, and I think Cobra Skulls were an example of that.

MRR: Do you see it as your role, or the label's, to develop bands as much as it is to release their music?

For sure. And by "develop" I'm talking about how to help them get on tours, plan releases, etc. There's a fair amount of life-coaching that comes along with running a label!

INDUSTRIES

...being the son of immigrants and growing up on a farm has had an effect on how the label consumes things. We try hard not to be wasteful and "keep the whole barnyard in mind," if you will. Ya know, punk rock could use a couple more farm kids, if you ask me.

MRR: Looking back, can you pinpoint any make-or-break moments for the label, or bands on the roster where there was a lot at stake?

After we had our distributor stiff us on a big payment, we were really low on funds and it looked bleak for future stuff. But we've had all these young bands consistently succeed, so eventually we regained our footing and were able to keep it going. It's pretty astounding, how much of an effect a distro can have on labels, bands, and people.

MRR: You mentioned the turnovers and machinations with distribution during Red Scare's existence. Is getting records out into stores and people's hands still the biggest hurdle for the label?

The label's job is to try and get the music heard by the most people, so I take distro pretty seriously. Bands are out there sleeping on floors and eating the world's worst food, so it's the least we can do to make sure we get their records out there. Of course, there aren't many stores left, so that calls into question what the role is gonna be for a label and a distributor. Who the fuck knows what the future holds, but we're working with a good distro now. They actually primarily deal with underground hip-hop, which sells a lot more than our silly punk rock stuff, so hopefully we can stick around a little longer.

MRR: Should we expect any hip-hop releases on Red Scare in the future?

It would be super cool to work with a hip-hop artist! It would have to make sense though, but I'm open to anything.

MRR: You've been somewhat vocal about the declining state of the music industry and specifically keeping a label afloat. Is it that bleak? Is there no country for old men, so to speak, when it comes to the need for independent labels?

Some bands can self-release stuff, and that works great. Some bands wanna focus on their music and playing live, so they want help getting their music heard. I used to think labels were going to truly disappear in the coming years, but now I think that's really unlikely because some bands really can't get shit done without a little help. The analogy "working with bands is like herding cats" is often thrown around, if that gives you any idea. But hey, punk rock isn't about being some individual rock star. It's a community and it's natural that there are other people involved and helping along.

MRR: Did your time spent on the farms of Enumclaw mold you into a patient, caring shepherd when it comes to herding bands then? Are you really just a glorified band farmer? I guess this may go back to the idea of developing bands, helping them get their collective shit together.

Ha, fuck you, pal. I was definitely kinder to the animals I grew up around than these dumb bands, so that should appeal to your vegan sensibilities. We're sorta joking about this stuff, but being the son of immigrants and growing up on a farm has had an effect on how the label consumes things. We try hard not to be wasteful and "keep the whole barnyard in mind," if you will. Ya know, punk rock could use a couple more farm kids, if you ask me.

MRR: Red Scare's roster was built around solid, traditional pop punk releases. What about pop punk do you love?

Weren't the Ramones the first-ever punk band? Do I really have to explain this?! We've always skewed towards "traditional-sounding punk"—as in bands that are influenced by Ramones, Clash, Misfits, etc. At the time when Teenage Bottlerocket came onto the scene, no one was doing that leather jacket style, Ramones-y punk rock stuff, so I'm glad we kinda helped get some of that going again.

MRR: Well a lot of people dismiss it these days as almost a novelty form of punk music. Obviously different strokes for different folks but, given the label has done a great job of finding bands that are "traditional-sounding punk" while being creative and fresh-sounding, I thought you might be able to talk more on how pop punk, or traditional-sounding punk, fits into a cynical, irony-drenched world where having fun with art is rarer these days. Especially in punk, which can be quite self-important (for better or worse). Now's your chance to convince us to drink the Kool-Aid.

Well, that's nice of you to say. I certainly think our bands are relevant, and I personally feel that old school influenced punk rock is the best, but it takes all kinds, ya know? People can dismiss "Ramones punk" and "Clash punk" all they want, but all these various trends have come and gone, no matter how chic they are at the time. But who are we to say what's good for punk rock? I'm open-minded—I just don't dig a lot of these new strains. Right now there is a fair number of bands infusing psychedelic rock with punk. *No thanks.* But back to our stuff, I don't really have a hard sell for this music. Let the songs speak for themselves, and if it resonates to you like it does to me, then you're gonna like the bands on Red Scare.

MRR: Punk in the Ramones tradition, riffed off of mutated forms of all-American pop songs and imagery—the presidential seal, etc. I was wondering if any of that iconography was in your mind when setting out with the logo and design of Red Scare, which seems to do the same with communism/socialism in many ways.

Huh, I never thought of it in terms of the Ramones logo. The Red Scare logo is obviously inspired by leftist, activist imagery, so that's where that comes from. I think Johnny Ramone used to wear a "Kill A Commie for Mommy" shirt, so I guess there's that connection. Man, what a dick that guy was!

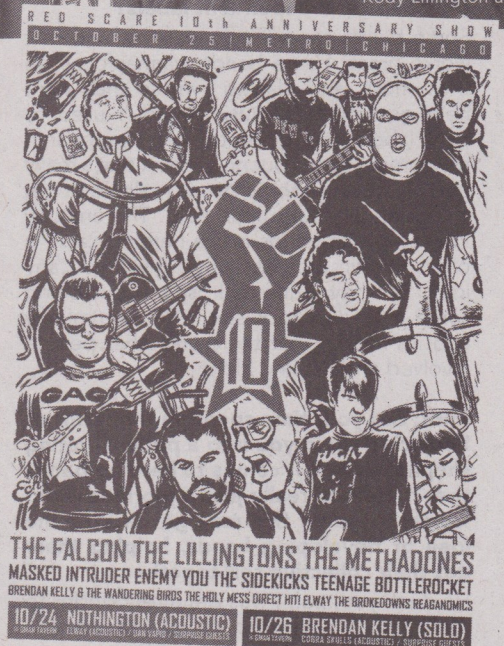
MRR: Speaking of using strong images, I know you're a big *Mad Max* fan. Have you ever considered incorporating some of the imagery from the movies into what you're doing at Red Scare? A flyer or gig poster maybe?

That would be fantastic! I would probably feel obligated to pay homage to Dungeons & Dragons before *Mad Max*. Now I just need to find a band dumb enough to let me get away with that dorky shit.

MRR: The label has always maintained a sense of social consciousness. How do you work that into everything the label does, from day-to-day operations to dealing with bands and releases?

I think it's weird to sometimes foist my personal politics on people and the bands, but for the most part we all agree on stuff. That's one great thing about the punk community: we all generally share our values on tolerance, equality, etc. One practical way we directly apply that to the label operations is that we use recycled materials for our packaging, and everyone is on board with that.

Kody Lillington and Toby Jeg



MRR: I guess I ask because of the strong leftist, socialist imagery associated with the label. I'm curious as to how much the label is your way of putting some of those ideas out there into the world?

I struggle with ideas on actually *how* to do that effectively, but at the same time respecting the art of the bands. You gotta remember, our logo is on the *back* of the record, ya dig? We may help facilitate the music, but an album is exclusively their platform. Funny story though, I've reached out to the IWW here in Chicago to see if they ever wanted to do anything with Red Scare and I've never been able to get through to them. You know how leftists are, they refuse to get along! I usually go to the May Day march here in town, so maybe we can get some bands out to play next year, I dunno.

MRR: Which band or releases best capture some of those ideas for you? Have there been times you disagreed with a band over content that you felt hasn't matched the label's values or principles?

I think Cobra Skulls *Sitting Army* has a great message that articulates a lot of our shared values. That was such a great album, especially for a band's first record! And yes, we have had disagreements with a band on content. I don't wanna be the thought police nor do I wanna restrict what bands do with their art, but sometimes you need to interject. We worked it out, like always.

MRR: So there were no show trials? You're telling me there is no Red Scare Politburo?!

You Australians are adorable with your notion of punk scandals! To answer your question, you gotta pick your battles, and we do our best to maintain a nice harmony on the roster. Like I keep saying, we really lucked out and have a great group of people we work with.

MRR: We all make mistakes. If you could have a mulligan for any mistake or misstep over the last 10 years, would you use it? What would you redo?

Yeah, I'd use that mulligan. Man, that's a pretty harsh question. We worked with a Canadian band called the Riptides and there was a real pattern of dishonesty on their part. For whatever reason, they aligned with Ben Weasel who was trying to manipulate people in bands and sow discontent. It's bizarre behavior from grown adults and it sounds like a bad episode of *Game of Thrones*, but yeah, that's how some people choose to spend their time. It's ancient history now though and those folks are now long gone, probably feeling embarrassed and miserable. The band basically bought their way onto the label, so that's what I get for that. The moral is that you should probably only work with people that you really, really know and trust.

MRR: You and the label seem to have built a strong culture and community in Chicago. How important has that been in maintaining the label and its independence?

Oh, for sure. People in Chicago have been so good to the bands. We had a great start in San Francisco when the label was first born, but you can see a notable shift in things because of the stupid tech economy. But shows in Chicago are great, smiling faces and friends everywhere. And at the end of the day, that's why we do this stuff. It sure ain't for the money, but our little community of weirdos and drunks in Chicago are having a better time than anyone in town, that I can promise you.

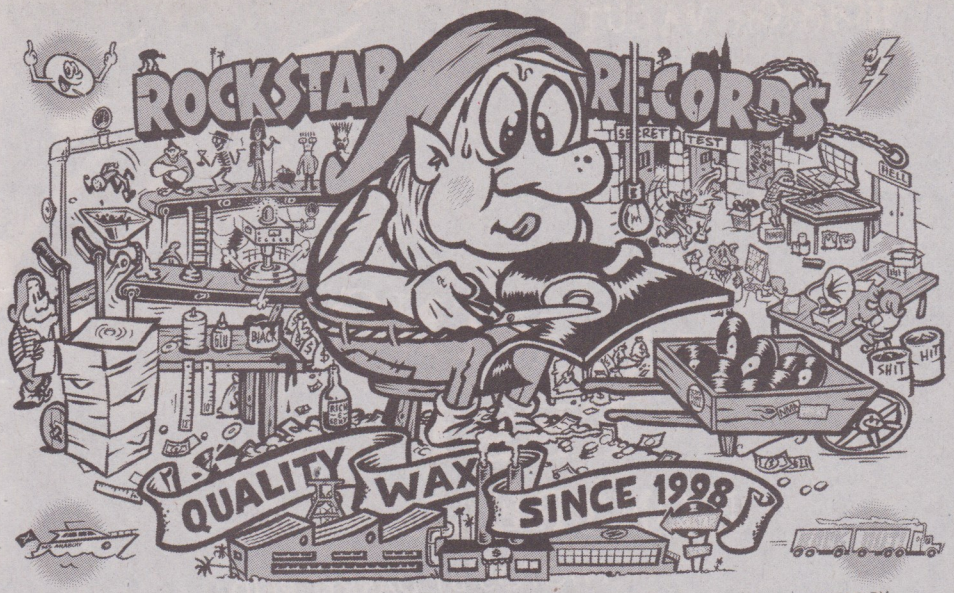
MRR: You held a 10-year celebration in October. How important for you is it to acknowledge what everyone has accomplished regarding the label and the community around it?

God, I forget who it was, but there was a similar entity in the punk world that was holding this big ceremony and it was so fucking vain. This was *not* like that. This was about the people who have been playing music and coming out to the shows. Ten years is cool, but it's so lame to pump your own tires about this stuff. This show and anniversary were more like, "Hey, we've been partyin' for a while now! High five!"

MRR: What do you think the next ten years will hold for Red Scare Industries?

I hope to keep finding music that I think is special. If that keeps happening, then I will continue to foolishly forge ahead and help these bands get noticed. I'll be honest with ya, it's an awesome feeling to be able to help a band grow and develop. I love watching my friends succeed and I hope I can keep having these opportunities to cheer them on from the sidelines.

Check redscare.net for updates on the label and its related bands.



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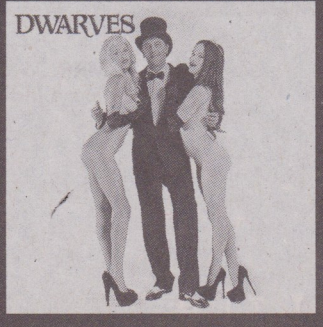

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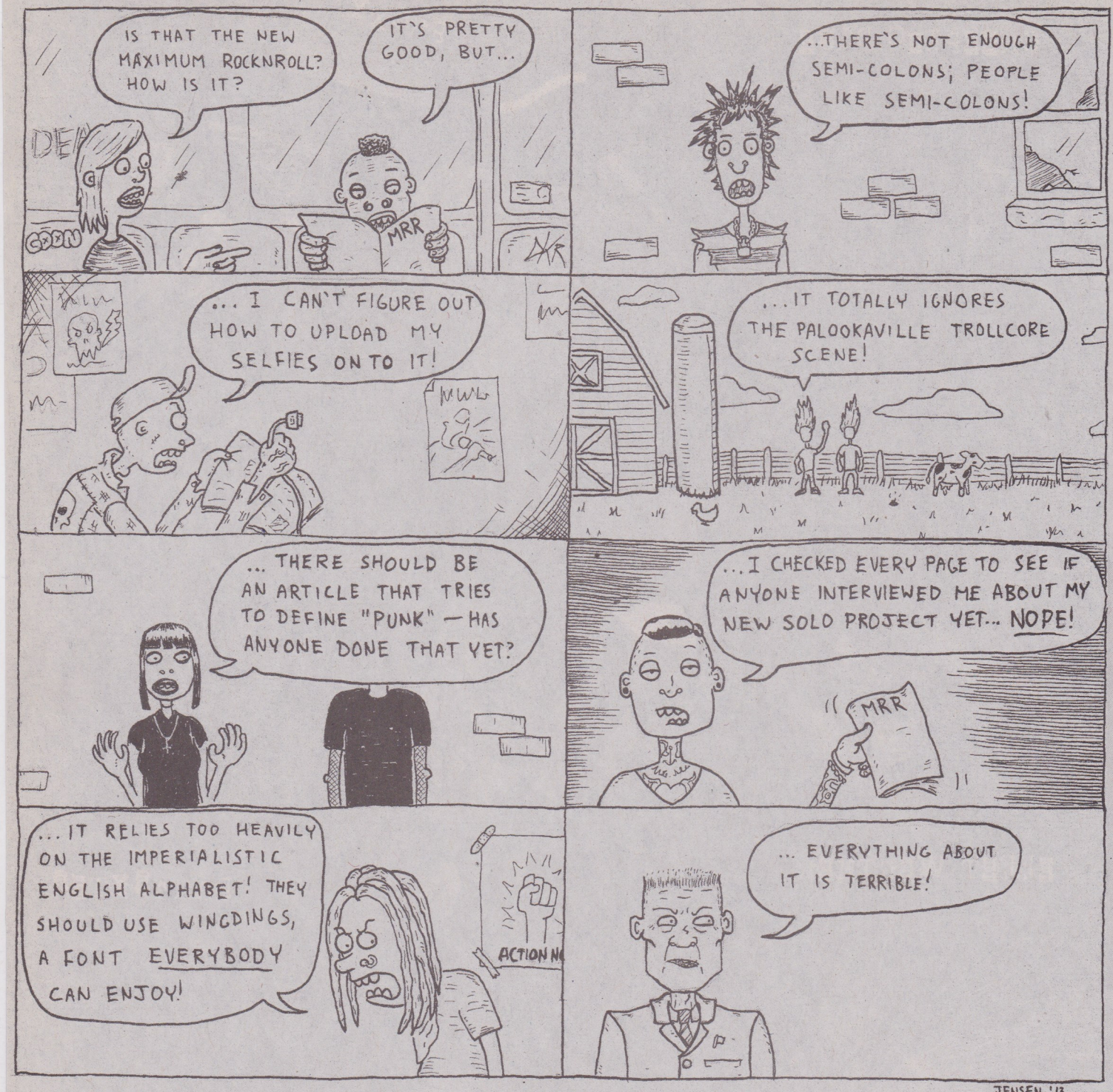

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orden mundial

Some will be pissed about this but there it goes: Orden Mundial, together with Las Otras, are among the best bands in Barcelona's hardcore. You know what's funny? Actually, Orden Mundial aren't from Barcelona but from Mallorca. A small Mediterranean island made of dry land, a greener mountain, beautiful beaches and temperate weather, with charming villages where you can't understand shit when people's talking. The Orden Mundial guys have spent so much time in town that I, a pure and proud Barcelonian, take advantage of the situation to sell everything good as if it was made at home.

Orden Mundial bring us the violent hardcore, the nihilist rage. Slovenly and psychedelic emissaries of the Nothing. Think about SSD, MG-15 or SS20. They are dirty and aggressive. Broken rhythms, broken voice, crazy guitar. And they play punk as I always thought it should be done: They don't delight in ineptitude (you know, that bullshit that says anything bad is automatically good) but they don't stupidly seek exquisite skills either. They go for the basics, primary instincts. Piercing lyrics and wild spirit. Their shows are for sweating, rubbing your body against the floor as a pig and lose your head once and for all.

Roughly, this is in my opinion the raw material Orden Mundial is made of.

Interview by Carol, Jan and Frutos • Intro by Frutos • Painfully translated by Hèctor • Pictures by Ana Magazzú, Adriana Petit and Dani Undenou • Drawings by Bernat

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MRR: Although Orden Mundial was founded in Mallorca, most of you are now living in Barcelona. Ain't no punks on the island?

JAUME: I'm not totally sure but I believe there's actually a good percentage of punks within Mallorca's population. Well, that's what people say when they come visit and they see how many shows, bands, and records we make happen. Here we live pretty well. It's a cozy island with soft and nice weather. Kind of Hawaiian or Caribbean-style but with four seasons that change the landscape a lot. We don't usually have tsunamis or earthquakes here. Recently the climate is getting more extreme: the step from summer to winter is increasingly sharper. That's a shame.

Despite being nice here, when you grow up you start feeling the need to leave. Let's say the island becomes a little claustrophobic, ha ha. That's what happened to us. We left years ago and now we are in the process of coming back. This is also quite usual for people here. There's something special on the island. In other places, you leave and never return. Fuck, I think it's the sin of the *mallorquí*: the belief that we are special at everything, ha.

RAFAELITO: Mallorca, it's been a year now since I got back to this damned island. Here things are different, punks wear super-short shorts during the summertime and we eat tumbet, a typical dish that our mothers showed us. It's quite easy, you only have to fry potatoes, red pepper and eggplant. Then, you cook the chopped tomato and pour it over. It's simply delicious. Knowing tumbet is good but the desire to increase our culinary wisdom pushes us to move to other places to learn, know and compare. Then we return to the island and teach others what we've learned.

Metaphors aside, I think Mallorca is in good shape in terms of bands and their releases. There's a good atmosphere and we do things wildly, no one is following trends, each one with their own craziness. Barcelona is very close, and for us islanders flight tickets are half price, thank god! Being surrounded by water awakens a curiosity for what is beyond. We knew that shit was happening in Barcelona, that we were not gonna get bored there, that there were squatted houses and plenty of punks. Hell yeah!

MARTÍ: Yeah, there are punks and a bunch of good bands in Mallorca but they are always the same people. I've had the feeling for some time that punk here is getting old. There are no 14-year-old kids coming to shows and going wild like we did. And the few of them soon fly to Barcelona, which is normal since there's a great scene there and I guess things are easier.

BERNAT: Well it's true, we are always moving, and every year changes the picture: one comes here, one goes over there... there's always someone falling to Barcelona. As you say, it's probably because of punk. Not that there are no punks in Mallorca—there are indeed quite a lot, for a shitty island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. To summarize: Mallorca is kind of the third or fourth punk scene in top form in Spain right now. First is Barcelona, which is also the best in Europe, that's why we are attracted to it and we go live there whenever we can.

MRR: Would you play in venues with bouncers?

M: I guess so, but there would surely be problems.

J: We don't like the idea, but I think there might be exceptions. For example, the usual bar that only has one guy checking that you don't take drinks outside. I dunno, I mean a guy who is not the typical bully gorilla who obviously sucks. If we talk about those venues with a bunch of guards with earphones, clubs and that shit...no way. Look, we like to play in more liberated spaces: better a squat than a bar but better a bar than a commercial venue. But we keep in mind that circumstances change at each place.

R: I think I would, honestly, I've done it before with other bands. Orden Mundial is not a security-guard-friendly band. We usually get in trouble with them at the store, the metro, the bars...A bouncer symbolizes lots of bad things. I hate them but I also hate: kids talking shit on the bus, the guy at the shop, my fascist uncle, and my doctor. Actually, I can imagine the punk bar guards' views to be wide, and you can probably find nice people, sometimes even nicer than punks, who can easily become a pain in the ass.

B: Well, we don't like bouncers, that's for sure, and I believe we haven't done it so far. But we are not the kind of band that gets to a venue on tour, realizes there's a guard and says: «no way are we playing with a guard here.» It all depends on the context. We don't have strict and immovable rules. The world is too complicated, and you sometimes need to be flexible and break the rules. Quite often the person who forbids breaking the rules, the dogmatic one, does it out of fear or just in an effort to try to prove something to their selves. It may be silly to pretend a maximum purity with your band when you're not that pure in your daily life. Every day I go to the store I give a smile to the guard while I shoplift as much as I can.

MRR: In the song "15-M" you criticize Movimiento 15-M, a new social movement that emerged in Spain about two years ago. Do you think everything around this movement is wrong? What would you ask for? How would you do it?

J: We already guessed it was going to be a controversial song when we wrote it. It has been indeed. It has detractors—people who stick up for 15-M, or at least a part of it, and therefore don't like the lyrics. We wrote it only two months after the movement showed up and we thought it was an interesting topic to talk about. Surely not everything about it is wrong, but its reason to exist, its form and its content—we saw it as a bit ridiculous. The first *big revolution* call from the social network, right? This is how it will be remembered. Who can stand for a mass movement organized through Twitter that filled all the newscasts? It was just a mock revolt in the vein of the current times. The big media intentionally helped spread a pre-fab discontent to pervert everything. Not that we got frustrated...its development didn't surprise us. We distrusted the 15-M from the outset. Not that we want to give ourselves any medals, either, but in those days of *struggle* if you didn't go to the meetings at Plaça Catalunya and raise hands, many people looked at you weirdly—even friends, ha.

I dunno, I think a lot needs to be done but I personally believe it's important to stay apart from the masses. Do it on a small scale. If we talk about sudden changes in the system, that's another thing. I think that will only happen for external causes, like a climate crisis or something, it will never be done because of the masses. That's my opinion. It's complicated. The issue is whether the passive consumer masses can get on the move or not.

R: Oh yeah, that was two years ago...I remember that spring craziness. So many hormones! Obviously, I don't think everything is wrong with that movement. There were super interesting projects and proposals. The problem is that it was completely empty. People went nuts thinking that a revolution was brewing while you could clearly see another thing going on... still don't know what. What's left from all of that? A revolution involves a change. 15-M didn't bring that. It was promoted by smartphones and social networks. The shit blew up like hell and seemed that everyone was angry but no way... people were there, sitting, and they couldn't even clap!

I would play in venues with bouncers but no way would I be part of a revolution where you are pointed out if you spray paint a wall or do anything they consider violence. That revolution was full of guards dressed in colors.

You see how much support those arrested in front of the Parliament have had...only the groups that already believed in revolution before the 15-M have been on their side. Good proposals came out and some spaces were squatted but, fuck, that's something that has always happened in Barcelona, hasn't it?

As a good friend once said to me: I am among those who believe that real revolution begins in the kitchen of my home. I trust the people I share it with. Then we'll see if we create a party where everyone could come. Not that I pretend to change the world with all those drunks, though.

B: Saying that everything around the 15-M was bad seems excessive and probably false. As usual, to propose anything is difficult in a big world, even more for someone who wants to live without government or cops. In the end, I differentiate what I want from what I believe. Following what I want makes me feel like a better person. Anarchy is my great utopia although I must admit it's hard to believe in it. I can only think of anarchy as among a very small group of people, and that's the way we try to run things between colleagues, punks, and anarchists. When it comes to proposing an organization of society, I in no way believe in anarchy. I totally distrust the human race, especially in large societies like ours where responsibility is infinitely divided and hidden. For this reason, I usually avoid proposing anything and I just live more or less in line with my way of thinking—quite a complicated task. It's hard to live in contradiction. It's been several years and I still don't know if it makes any sense.

I rejected 15-M because it was just a euphoric movement that aspired to bring democracy closer to the citizens. Although it's not bad, personally it didn't appeal to me at all. Today 15-M is completely dead.

MRR: Obviously Orden Mundial is not influenced by Michael Jackson, but do you like any other kind of music besides hardcore punk?

R: In my case this answer could never end. I know my buddies and it's probably the same for them. I love music on every level: drums of war, a man screaming in rage, a violin and a tambourine, the guy who plays guitar in Sant Miquel street, punk, hardcore, garage, psychedelia, blues, rock'n'roll, grunge, death metal, post-punk, batucada, flute, flamenco.

MRR: Is there a band you are stoked about in current punk?

J: I like Boston Strangler a lot. From Spain: Crimen de Estado, Absurdo, and Cisma are my favorites. Kriegshog are amazing, too.

R: I'm proud of being part of a scene where so many friends have awesome bands: La URSS, Absurdo, Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Sudor, Crimen de Estado, Arrest, Desenterradas, Las Otras, Aspirina Infantil...

M: I love Mauser and Effluxus in that fast, noisy and crazy vein.

B: Firmeza 10, Los Monjo, Las Otras, and Crimen de Estado.

MRR: Do you think MRR Top Tens have a real influence on people willing to listen to a band?

J: We do, really. There are so many bands and everything is so accessible nowadays that competition is pretty tough and people hardly give a chance to anything outside their circle of friends, who at the end of the day are those peo-

ple who listen more to your music, are the hugest *fans*, and are the ones who tell you that what you are doing makes some sense. If someone in Japan likes your band, that's fucking great, but not the most important.

The thing is that MRR has a lot of power. I don't know, they have been there forever, therefore if they write a good review of your stuff, you appear on a Top Ten... seems pretty important. However, if you think about it, in every issue there are tons of reviews and new Top Tens, so it is not as transcendental as some tend to believe. But anyway, you can't deny the repercussion that a review in MRR has. Many people are gonna give you a chance and listen to you (at least once). Then sometimes it happens that you hear about a band that got trendy in MRR and you think: «Man, this sucks, some people don't know shit.» Or there's a bad review of a band you like or you are friends with and you think: «MRR doesn't know what's good.» It's about going against, isn't it?

After all, what makes people listen to your band is word of mouth, so the true relevance of MRR is hard to point out. Does everyone care about MRR? Are those who care really influenced by whatever MRR says? Honestly, I do think some freaks really follow MRR's guidance and they end up having the same musical taste. I dunno, it's just another punk zine. Maybe in the UK if More Noize talks about you, that's more important than a MRR Top Ten. Who knows? But what are we trying to measure? Fame and success? This may sound a bit villagy, but what is really important is your people.

R: Honestly, I do think so. Even some punks look for a guarantee. I see it as normal, although it doesn't happen to me.

M: Yeah, I guess so. On the one hand I think it's good because it helps people to decide, but on the other it's shit because some people think that if your band is not on a Top Ten then you don't deserve to be heard.

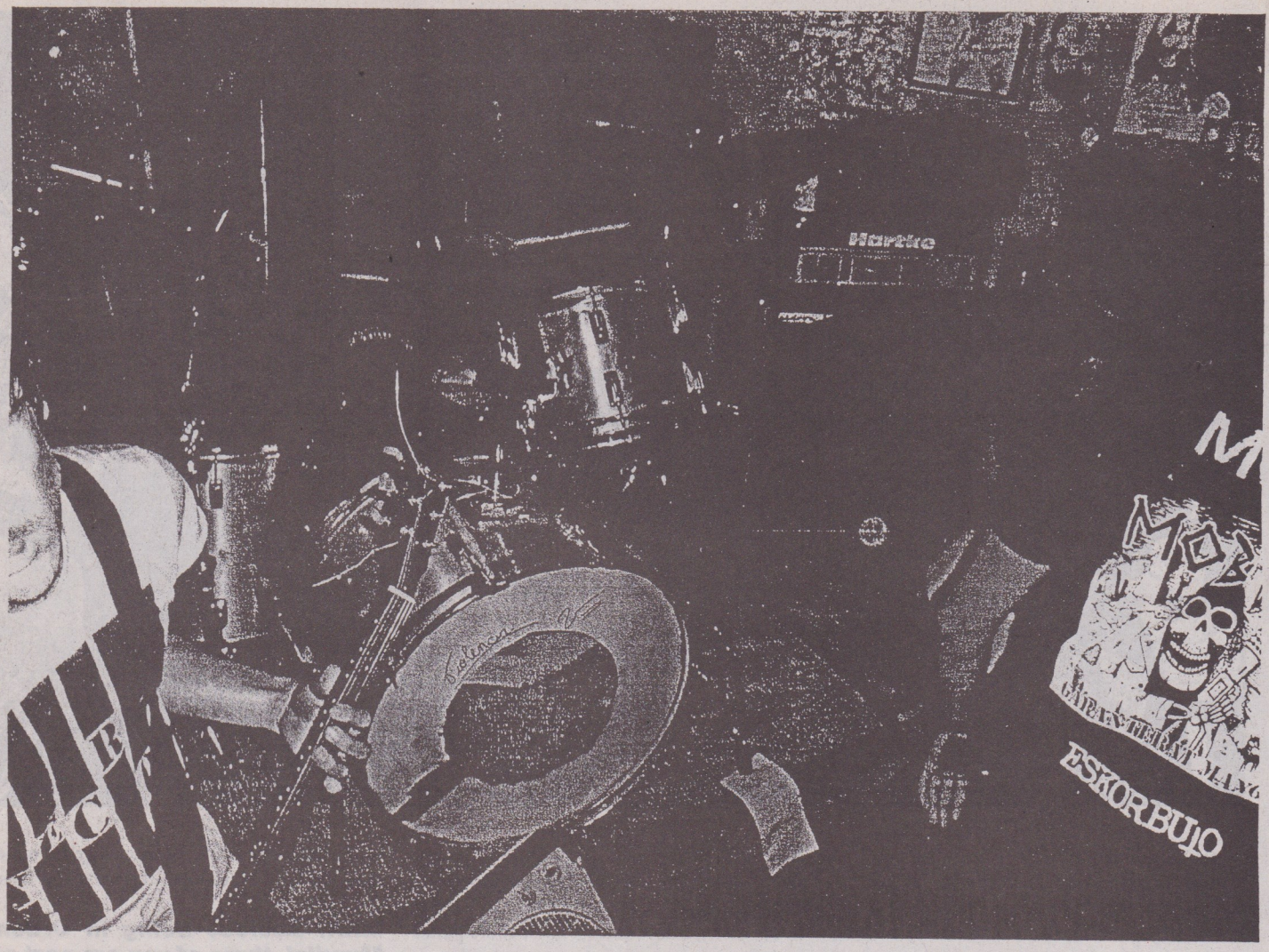
B: Without question. Many distros use it as a reference. If MRR says it's good, you have to check it out. If a band is on a few top tens, it will be easier to sell and distribute. Obviously this has good and bad sides. Many say MRR is the punk bible and they are probably right, but it all depends on your attitude towards it. It's enough to realize that the opinion of MRR is simply the opinion of the person writing; it's subjective. Personally, I must say, I'm very influenced, ha. I'm always checking the Top Tens to see if a band I like or any friends got on there. And if a band makes multiple Top Tens I try to check it out. They overlook great records and probably highlight pieces of shit sometimes but whatever, that's totally normal. Here in Barcelona for example, it hurt us to see the Crosta LP review because we love that record. Many people complained, but they keep sending records and waiting for a good opinion. It's the best way to bring your band to the world. I may change my mind some day but I would totally keep the Top Tens.

MRR: Besides being in Orden Mundial, three of you are part of the Niu de Rates collective. Tell us something about it.

J: Niu de Rates is the name we use to set up shows (especially for bands out of Mallorca) and also for our fanzine, like a newsletter. We've put out four issues so far. The idea behind the zine is to promote punk done here within the scene by the Mallorca punks. To capture this on paper beyond internet metaphysics and ephemeral talks. The shows are more about bringing current bands that we feel are interesting. This way, more DIY bands can come here, they get to know what's going on in the island and the punks here get to see them for cheap. We share this goal with Metadona and Old Kids Brigade. Actually, they are more active than we are.

We must admit that Niu de Rates is pretty intermittent. Our rhythm is not constant, mostly because we are not always living in the same place. In two years we have barely put on five shows (Crimen de Estado, Crazy Spirit...) and have only put out four issues of the zine. It's a humble project.

B: Our main goal is helping build a better punk scene on our island. Niu de Rates is mostly known for the zine. There, we talk about every-



thing related to punk in Mallorca. Our audience is the Mallorcan population, so it's written in Mallorquí. We've always thought it makes no sense on the outside, but it is true that if anyone has some curiosity for our scene and understands our language, they will find some useful stuff. I believe with these four issues it became important for our community.

We've learnt that, with our target, positivity is essential, as is tact. Obviously not everything is as we'd like it to be, but many things are going well and there are good intentions. Mallorca has a small scene so we must care for the different kinds of punk done there. We just want to motivate them, we want them to be more ambitious and believe in what they are doing.

MRR: You know I'm the number one fan of all your projects, but I've said this before: I think your lyrics are a bit exaggerated. There are many different ways of saying something, but you talk about everything in a very overwhelming way. Excuse me for this, but it sounds to me like some armchair nihilism. Well, actually I'm not totally sure about that, neither I am asking anything in particular, but I think this is a good way of irritating you so you talk a bit of your writings on punk. So you understand me, I prefer* Nacido del Polvo de un Borracho y del Coño de una Puta *by La Banda Trapera del Río to Eskorbuto's* Historia Triste. *Both bands were a bunch of drug addicts and only one of each has survived so I hope it's a valid comparison.

J: Frutos, you are going out of your mind (luckily you are against drugs). What a question... Well, nihilism is a tricky issue. I personally think it's a stinky word, same as *hipster.* Both are regularly used in punk but it's not totally clear what they mean. They're like a dumpster where you can throw away what doesn't fit in the dogma. On the other hand, we don't pretend to be nihilists, we care about stuff—if being nihilist means not giving a fuck about anything—and we don't try to spread nihilism as a political choice. Besides, our lyrics and the texts in the insert of our record are the total opposite of nihilism; this is how I see it. They are a strong attack towards nihilist morals that contaminate this world. I mean, capitalism is totally nihilist. Our texts are like a starting point, not solutions, not even conclusions. Everyone draws their own. Yours, for example, it's a possible interpretation that I just don't agree with. I don't think that because we speak firmly that we are *armchair nihilists*. I don't think that our lyrics are too high-handed, either. We are punks, we are not sisters of mercy; we look for bluntness. Some people may think we are bold, but my uncle also thinks I'm insane for playing punk. He wants me to play in an orchestra and shit. Honestly, I think we are neither too excessive nor too humble. Humility can be faked, too. We must admit we are a bit nihilistic in the end, but not any more than you or your neighbor, given that we all live in a completely empty society.

R: Really? Armchair nihilism? Our text may be a bit exaggerated because of the way it was written. It's beautiful and we provide some entertainment to the reader. A poetic look at punk and stuff around us. You can talk about how art sucks but at the end of the day that's our fucking art piece. La Trapera and Eskorbuto probably didn't think about it. Playing with words is fun and we all enjoy it. So, tell me, where is the nihilism here? The message is pure

and sincere. We are part of a frustrated generation that has no answers and is incapable of solving a couple of stupid problems, ending up sunk in depression. This is my fight and Orden Mundial is a declaration of war against apathy and frustration.

M: Frutos, I don't get your point. We do some drugs but no one is a junkie yet, so there's no reason to worry. About the lyrics, Bernat is a philosopher, but you already knew that.

B: We've realized we have different points of view on this subject. I do think there's some nihilism in Orden Mundial. We need it, although the anarchist punks want to silence it and hide it. As if everyone's worldview has to pass through the anarchist ideology for it to be accepted. Sometimes it feels like we are part of a sect, an overly Christian one. I feel the need to experiment, to think beyond our morals, to at least be able to question them.

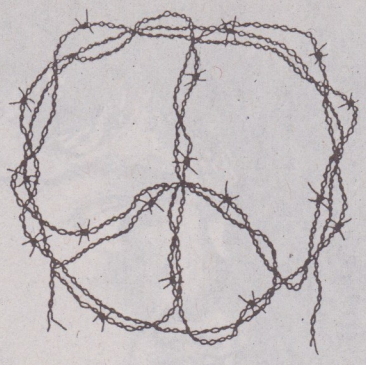
When you spend the night in the mountains, away from the city, and lie and stare at the starry sky, you usually undergo a series of shocking thoughts and feelings that seem to destroy your daily life. Orden Mundial is closely linked to the nocturnal and tries to be the voice that challenges the boundaries, playing at the edges, on the fringe, and with the mistreated. Of course, you have to look at the stars.

Finally, I must add that when I write in this way, I do so with fear and I feel exposed to several threats. We were not sure if we should include the text on the record. Doing so was a statement of sincerity and a communication need. This in no way means we are bitter people. I want to clarify that accepting the fact that our mode of writing may be blunt, our thoughts are filled with doubt and writing is always a risk, one we decided to take. We are open to debate, we believe in it, and believe that a conflict with good intentions is enriching.

MRR: You've talked about the Barcelona punk scene. It's true that there are plenty of bands and shows, but I think not everything going on is that cool. There's too much competition; everyone wants to be highlighted, to be the best, the most famous...it sucks. That's not punk at all. There is little concern for what is collective and a lot of ego and outward projection instead. You are already fully citizens here so, what do you think about it?

J: The truth is that I preferred Barcelona about three or four years ago, and I don't think it's just a matter of nostalgia. I identified more with the bands then than now. Especially in regards to the music, true, but also in attitude, I must admit it. However, what is good (I think really good) about Barcelona is that bands with different approaches live together. You can have whatever you like the most, right? But on a general level there are some noticeable changes. I guess it's normal, everything is continually evolving, and what seemed to be clear in one moment is not so in another, and vice versa.

R: I've lived in Barcelona for five years. I'm in Mallorca now but I keep going back as soon as I have time and money to travel. Honestly, my head also goes round and round about the Barcelona scene. Things have changed quite a bit. Some for better and some for worst. People there have this mess inside their heads; it's not normal. I like to be where shit is happening as well and even attract attention. I like to party and I like dressing nice. I also like that people dig my bands. But this is so prevailing



in Barcelona. People dress properly and play in great bands but some real shit is being lost...no identity, no familiarity.

When I got there, I was living with squatters from l'Hospitalet, Uruguay, and Cádiz. We had an empire that we shared with all kinds of people: anarchists, radical secessionists, parasites, people going to jail...It was nuts. The atmosphere was a bit decadent, right, but we had fun and we learnt a lot. There was this family life that it lacks now.

Right now, Barcelona has an amazing punk expression but is too individualistic, too chic, too fashionable, too hipster, too slave. Kids draw some cute little skulls and crosses on themselves but I don't see anything else. Fuck, it's sad! I miss the carrion, the stink of gasoline on my hands, a night at the cell for picking locks, having a walk in a balaclava on a sunny day...It's called struggle for survival, helping each other, knowing what is dying when it shouldn't. Knowing if our goal is to end up telling our fucking history in MoMA or if we have a real strength that we will pass on to our children.

M: I can't say much about Barcelona. I guess competition and hunger for fame and all that shit are everywhere. Maybe being a bigger town, the effect is more exaggerated, I dunno...

B: I think sometimes a virtue and a flaw are the same thing. All this negative stuff you are talking about may be the other, good side of the same coin I've pointed out before. Of course, this doesn't mean you can't improve—you must always try. As I've been told, not many years ago the scene was even more divided than now. I guess you know this better than me. I've lived in many other places and always got connected to their punk scenes. I can tell you that the scene in Barcelona has always aroused my interest but it's also true that it has some hateful things. Sometimes I picture the Barcelona punks being trapped in places like Mallorca or Granada or any smaller lost town. You'd probably be disoriented and frustrated. I think you often are not aware of it. You have so much variety and wealth that you dedicate your time to watching each other, to find fault, and divide your scene. That attitude doesn't seem right, you have to be critical but it's also important to be able to enjoy what you have.

MRR: Alright, a more relaxed question now. I love the art on the LP! I think Bernat did it. Do you put much thought into your designs? Does Bernat do stuff for other projects besides Orden Mundial?

J:.A record is not only what you play. For us, it's our way of expressing ourselves. We give special importance to the final product: lyrics, design, paper, the aura that transmits, concordance between images, music, and the thought behind it, etc. Make it something compact. A piece of art, nothing more, nothing less.

B: I'm glad you like it, thanks. What I look for in the design is to better accompany the music and the lyrical content. The cover art is a good tool to round off the concept on the recording. In the case of Orden Mundial, it needed to be very aggressive and simple and I think I got it. Although I don't draw as often as I would like, I really enjoy doing covers, posters, comics and fanzines. Small and sporadic stuff, without much ambition. They asked me some things but not many, my art is unprofessional, very amateur! Besides Orden Mundial and some friends' bands, I draw and do layout for our punk collective Niu de Rates.

MRR: Tell us about the new record—lyrics, sound, spirit.

M: Armchair nihilism lyrics. Dirty sounds. Wild spirit and claustrophobic atmosphere leading to rapid and primitive rage.

J: Lyrically it follows the path of the first one. I don't think it has changed much. There's this one called "Última Guerra" but they are mostly more like "Juventud Vacía" but sometimes darker and sometimes more ironic. Now that one would have been called "Juventud Divino Tesoro."

Sonically, it is pretty different. It's not the same. It's been over two years since we recorded the first album and it shows. This sounds more violent and harsh and has heavier parts. Although the spirit continues, we have pursued different formulas, we have continued searching for the crystal clear water. I think I'm not mistaken saying that those who liked the first album will like this one too.

B: We keep with the dirt. Guitar is dirtier, vocals not that much though. Drums and bass are more up front. Speaking of the lyrics is a complicated subject. We express how we live reality, fears and doubts we have. Rather than indoctrinate anyone, I think we try to invite reflection and reveal some things we often take for granted.

MRR: I could go on and on...but to finish, tell us one of those good, good times with Orden Mundial. One of those times when you think to yourselves: «Fuck, this shit is so cool I won't change Orden Mundial for anything.» And the opposite, one day that was a complete disaster.

M: I remember one day in Malmö, we got drunk as fuck and Rafita and Jaume were about to hit each other hard right inside the van of the guys who were taking us to their place. Ha ha ha! Fuck, what those people must have thought of us! The worst thing was their faces next morning... these guys!

R: I also remember that night, Martí! Before that I almost ripped off my own dreadlocks. I can barely remember anything but I do remember how you were yelling like a child. I wouldn't change Orden Mundial for anything. It is not replaceable. While that name is obviously somewhat circumstantial, there's something immortal behind it. Four true friends. A family where I'm able to be myself in a 100% natural way. We know each others' good and bad sides and still we love each other a little bit more everyday. I feel the pain when any of them is suffering and I see ourselves in 40 years sitting around a table talking about the last MRR issue.

Orden Mundial's new LP *Obediencia Debida* is available now on La Vida Es Un Mus. Listen online at ordenmundial.bandcamp.com and catch them on their upcoming North American tour.

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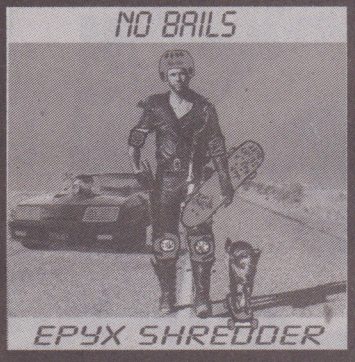

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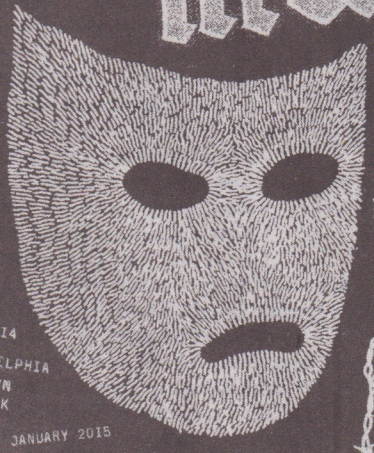

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NOTS is the sound of Memphis deconstructing the possibilities of punk, simultaneously wild and vicious, reiterating the dada elements that bands like Kleenex and electric eels put forth with added garage gasoline… Their first two 45s are sick brutalist perfection, and the just-released LP We Are Nots *demonstrates their true power and genius. Consume or be consumed!*
Interview by Layla Gibbon / Photo by Leah Hunt

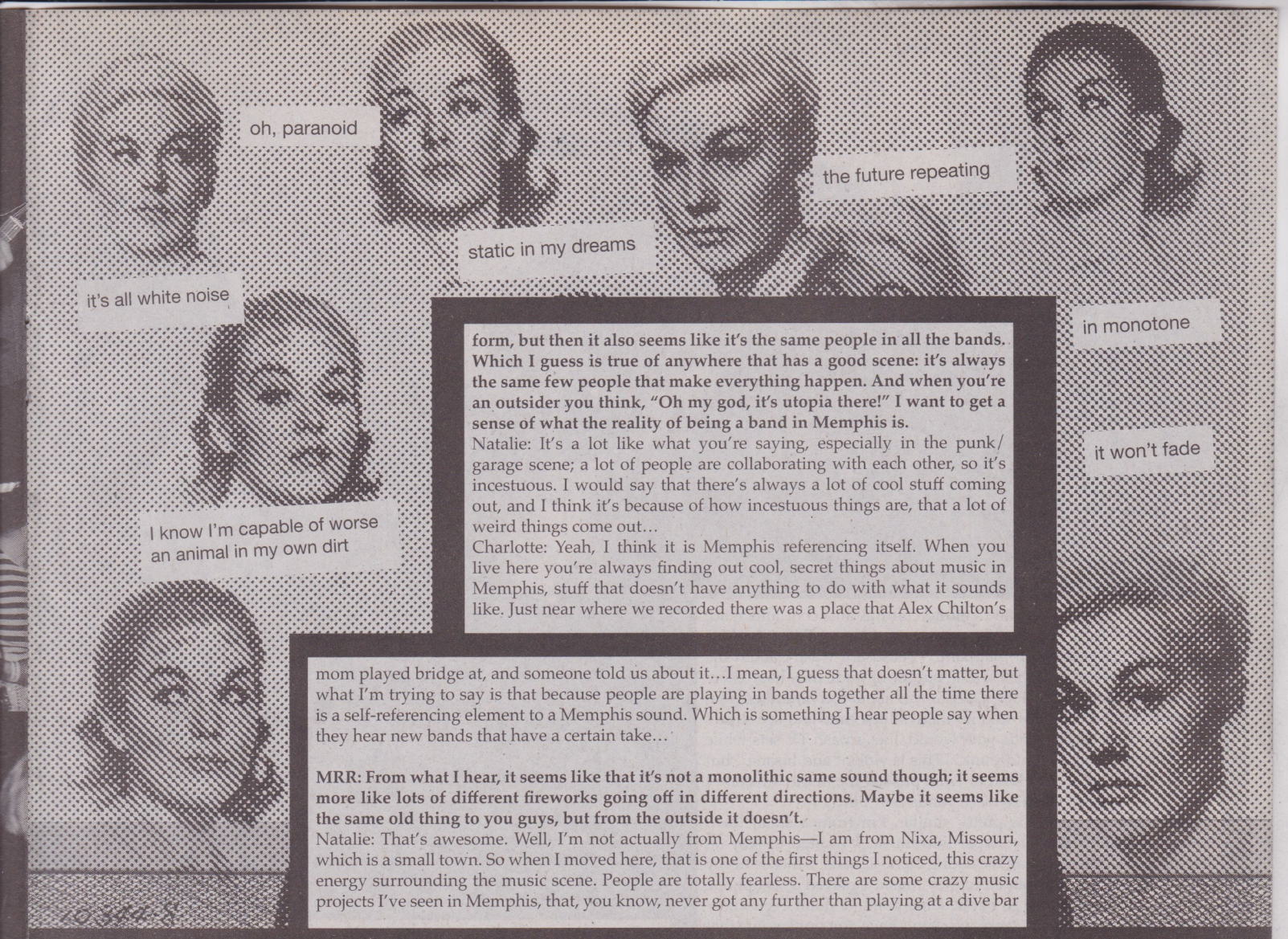
MRR: I wanted to ask about how Nots formed, because I read that you had been a band for two years before your 7" came out and it just seemed like an epic gestation period…I want to get an idea of the beginning of Nots! I was thinking about this particularly because I was in a band when I was a teenager that was more of an excuse to hang out with my friends and make strange sounds together than a "proper" band.
Natalie: We definitely love making strange sounds together! I'm sure that's been the process since the beginning, but Nots was originally me and Charlotte. We had a third person playing with us called Carly, who rules—she's a really good bassist but she ended up moving away. Nots has had a few incarnations, it's crazy but it's always been with friends. The line-up on the singles is me and Charlotte, but Charlotte plays bass instead of drums. We played with our friend Lauren who played drums, but she quit the band so now we're in this formation.

MRR: So Charlotte's the Brian Jones of the group, you can just play every instrument…
Charlotte: [Laughs] I don't know…

MRR: When I listen to your records it sounds like some unearthed Urinals recordings or something. Did you have a particular style in mind, or an idea of what kind of sound you wanted? Or did it just end up that way?
Natalie: It just happened!
Charlotte: Yeah, I don't think I've ever been in a band that's like, "I will do this style." It's never been that way in Nots; it's real collaborative, it's automatic almost.

MRR: That's cool. I was just wondering because when I heard the Nots 45s it seemed like your band captured this crazy thing that just happened, rather than what other bands are doing right now, which is setting out to sound a specific way, to emulate specific bands. When you write songs, do you have a specific lyrical intent? Are your lyrics in jokes or serious missives?
Natalie: I do a lot of free writing. Sometimes we'll write the music first and we'll practice a lot and all just kind of sing nonsense over it. Sometimes I'll sing some words over it that I think sound cool and then I have to go home and sit with them and rewrite for a long time and see what comes out of it, and I try to make it coherent. Or not coherent!

MRR: Whenever I hear about Memphis it seems like this amazing musical Wizard of Oz place where all these incredible bands



form, but then it also seems like it's the same people in all the bands. Which I guess is true of anywhere that has a good scene: it's always the same few people that make everything happen. And when you're an outsider you think, "Oh my god, it's utopia there!" I want to get a sense of what the reality of being a band in Memphis is.

Natalie: It's a lot like what you're saying, especially in the punk/garage scene; a lot of people are collaborating with each other, so it's incestuous. I would say that there's always a lot of cool stuff coming out, and I think it's because of how incestuous things are, that a lot of weird things come out…

Charlotte: Yeah, I think it is Memphis referencing itself. When you live here you're always finding out cool, secret things about music in Memphis, stuff that doesn't have anything to do with what it sounds like. Just near where we recorded there was a place that Alex Chilton's mom played bridge at, and someone told us about it…I mean, I guess that doesn't matter, but what I'm trying to say is that because people are playing in bands together all the time there is a self-referencing element to a Memphis sound. Which is something I hear people say when they hear new bands that have a certain take…

MRR: From what I hear, it seems like that it's not a monolithic same sound though; it seems more like lots of different fireworks going off in different directions. Maybe it seems like the same old thing to you guys, but from the outside it doesn't.

Natalie: That's awesome. Well, I'm not actually from Memphis—I am from Nixa, Missouri, which is a small town. So when I moved here, that is one of the first things I noticed, this crazy energy surrounding the music scene. People are totally fearless. There are some crazy music projects I've seen in Memphis, that, you know, never got any further than playing at a dive bar but were still really cool to go watch, and catch on to that sort of energy.

MRR: That's one of my favorite things about punk, it's almost like this Dada thing, where something happens and it might have been recorded or it might just disappear into the ether. One of the most depressing things about punk now is that it's so reverent to the past, and people get hung up on things in this weird museum-like manner and I think one of the cooler aspects is that things *do* disappear and you *don't* know what happened and maybe it's just a conversation but you'll never know exactly…

Charlotte: That's a cool way to put it.

Natalie: Sometimes I think it plays off this "fuck you" quality. Ignorance is not the right way to put it, because people know a lot about punk history here for sure, but I think that people are willing to try whatever weird thought, and not just stay scripted to something.

MRR: If you look at any picture of a show nowadays, every single kid is wearing a T-shirt of some band from 30 years ago, and it makes me think that when you look at old pictures of punks, before the spikey uniform set in, they just did whatever they thought punk was, and it just seemed wilder and less rigid. When I listened to your record I totally freaked out and got this feeling of, "What's gonna happen next?" I wanted to ask you about this, because I got into an argument with someone about it. This writer compared an all-female band from the early '90s called Slant 6, who I know were influenced by the Wipers and Wire and Dead Moon, to that band Sleater-Kinney; because no matter what you do, if you are a woman making music you're a Riot Grrrl band. And obviously I'm not trying to dis Riot Grrrl, it's cool, but it happened a million years ago, and every time a woman opens her mouth it isn't automatically that, you know?

Natalie: It's hilarious how many times people tell us we sound like a Riot Grrrl band—usually it's Bikini Kill, whom we don't sound anything like! It's interesting. Well, interesting is a polite way to put it. It gets old. It feels kinda lazy in some ways, as far as a comparison goes.

MRR: I was googling your band to see what other people have written about you because of this question, and all I could find were references to Kleenex and Urinals! Obviously not everything that has been written about your band is google-able, but it's cool, it's like you somehow have fixed it so…

Natalie: Yeah, that's not so bad! We played in New Orleans and a few people came up to me when I was selling merch to say hello and what not, and then this girl who was probably a teenager said, "Y'all are so good! I definitely heard Wire in your music." It was rad since she didn't worry about only comparing us to an all female band.

MRR: It's so funny because when you're making music, especially the way you described it earlier, where it's this intentional accidental discovery thing, that to me is very much in the spirit of early Wire or Urinals, where there's this sense of adventure and you don't know what's gonna happen. And then the end result is somehow "Bikini Kill!" I mean, how do you go through life thinking, "All women sound the same"? They never compare female bands to male bands, it's always, "You gals sit over there!"

Natalie: You have to laugh about it. What else are you gonna do?

MRR: What was the first band that each of you saw where you thought, "OK, I can do this"?

Allie: I grew up in Hot Springs, Arkansas. There was a punk scene there, surprisingly, and there weren't exactly fantastic bands, but they had that attitude and they were doing what they wanted, and it didn't even really matter what the sound was like, just that they were doing something

photo: Hugo Alejandro Rodas

that was unconventional and countercultural and cool and wild, you know? I didn't necessarily go and see Maggot Filled Asshole and think "I wanna be in that band," because it wasn't about the sounds they were making. It was about the attitude they had. There was a great scene in Little Rock which was about forty minutes from where I grew up, and I would go there all the time and see shows and there were crazy bands who would, like, smash TV sets while they were playing. I would think, "This is violent and insane," but it was really cool. That's kind of what pushed me in the direction I went in. I wouldn't listen to these bands now but…

Natalie: My experience is pretty similar, I'm from a small town called Nixa and I was just super into music. I wanted to play an instrument so my mom had me taking piano lessons, which is funny now, but I just always wanted to play music. I played a saxophone in high school and loved it, but at some point—I don't even know what band it would have been, we didn't have any punk scene that I was aware of—I saw a band that had a female front person and she was playing guitar…I heard them sound checking, and I didn't even really like the music. It was like what Allie was saying, she just had this *attitude*. Just writing her own songs and playing and doing it, and I remember thinking, "That is awesome." Maybe I was fifteen, maybe younger, but I got a guitar and thought, "This is what I'm doing from now on." I don't remember thinking about being in a band that would tour or anything, I just wanted to write songs.

Madison: I have a pretty similar thing too. I'm from a small town in Arkansas where I am absolutely sure there was no cool punk scene! There were a couple of Christian hardcore bands under the guise of straightedge and I knew I definitely did not wanna do that! So I was actually deterred for a while! [laughter] But eventually I moved to New York and that's where everything opened up for me, a whole new world. Just meeting Fiona, who was one of the first people I played music with and had a band with…

MRR: That was Coasting right?

Madison: Yeah, I started to get to know her and that whole group. It was like, "You could do this, or I could do this" and it was just so encouraging and cool. So it happened kind of later for me, but I was always playing music, like piano and I had a guitar in high school and stuff. For me it was more of a scene thing than a definitive band, just being part of a community made me realize I could do it.

Charlotte: I'm from Miami, Florida, and my sister went to shows and I would tag along with her, which she didn't like very much. It was all screamo and stuff, and I can't remember seeing a band in particular that was life-changing or anything, but I remember just always wanting to play drums in particular. I asked my parents if I could have a drum set and they said no because it's too expensive and it's too loud so I got a guitar, and had to play guitar. I eventually got around to playing drums somehow, playing in bands and just playing with different people. But I remember growing up and seeing these bands and thinking they were all really bad. Thinking that I could do that and it's not that hard, I could be better than that! My sister was super into all of it, and I was just a tagalong brat that thought it was all terrible!

MRR: So classic. I had a similar thing growing up where I got into underground music through Huggy Bear, who were into all these cool writers and bands and made being in a band seem like more of an idea explosion than just wanting to be famous…Then after they broke up it was so desolate in London. My friends and I would go see terrible, terrible emo bands just to have something to do, just to feel part of something DIY that was happening. It seems like there's so much more going on now—no one has to watch shitty screamo bands if they don't want to. Maybe because the internet allows ideas to move around faster, there are thirty thousand micro genres you can be into. It seems less isolating and depressing. What was the first record you got that really hit you?

Charlotte: When I was a teenager I somehow got *White Light White Heat*, and it was something that none of my friends in Miami knew about. In the suburbs of Miami when I was growing up no one was really listening to rock'n'roll, but my dad has Cream records and my mom listened to Donovan; just a lot of rock music in general…So I started buying records because I thought that was cool, and I got that record at the music store in my neighborhood and was just like, "Oh! This is rock'n'roll." And I still listen to that record all the time. Well, when the mood hits me. It's always good and makes me feel so nostalgic. I just got this Velvet Underground bootleg that's doing the same things to me that *White Light White Heat* did when I was sixteen…I've listened to it every day for the past few weeks since I got it at Goner. But for me *White Light White Heat* was the rock'n'roll record where, once I got it, it all made sense.

nots

MRR: I listen to that at work all the time, whenever I'm like, "What music do I even like?" Oh, *White Light White Heat*...

Allie: It's tough because I'm sifting through all my dad's records, because I got a record player really early. He had great records, like King Crimson, stuff like that, but the one that really stuck out wasn't one of his records, it was a record that my boyfriend got for me in high school, an X-Ray Spex single, *Oh Bondage Up Yours*. It was an original single, and that record obviously blew my mind. That's the one that sticks out for me.

Natalie: It took me a really long time to explore music outside of just listening to the radio in the suburbs and going to the occasional weird sort of indie show, and it took me until I moved to Memphis to get a record player, and I was around people who were showing me cool things all the time. But, weirdly enough, I remember sitting on the porch with one of my friends and talking about Jimi Hendrix and...I got *Electric Ladyland* from my uncle when I was just going through all my relatives' record collections, and I also got some records from my dad, but it took me talking to my friend. "Yeah, Jimi Hendrix—he's so famous, I wanna check out other things," and my friend was like, "seriously, just go listen to '1983'" and it reminded me of being a kid and listening to those records with my dad. He had all those Hendrix records but he actually had more of a new wave collection, like the Cure and shit. And when I was a kid I was like "Ah, Dad this is too weird!" and it took someone in Memphis being like "Go listen to that again!" It influenced me a lot.

I found another band called Index, they have a record called *1967*, and I think they're trying to rip off Jimi Hendrix, but they're not very good at it, so it sounds even cooler to me almost, because it's so shitty...But I would have to say that *Electric Ladyland* is the one for me, because when I revisit it I think, "what the fuck, this is so cool." Shouldna shaken it off like I was too cool for Jimi!

Madison: I've been thinking about it for a long time, I wanted to separate from where I grew up and my parents, and looking back now they had a great record collection, but I wanted nothing to do with it really. I just wanted to get out of Arkansas. It was just me being stubborn and kind of an asshole—if they liked it I wanted nothing to do with it. So I think a really important record that was my own discovery, that was not influenced by family and stuff, was Yo La Tengo's *I Can Hear the Heart Beating as One*. It was something I found by myself in a record store, my own thing, and you know, they weren't dead so I could go see them! So that band is special to me personally, down to the way they do it. I would love to have a partner that I played music with. That's the dream.

MRR: I wanted to ask about your LP. It will be out by the time this interview is printed, right? How long did it take to record? How did you come up with songs for the record?

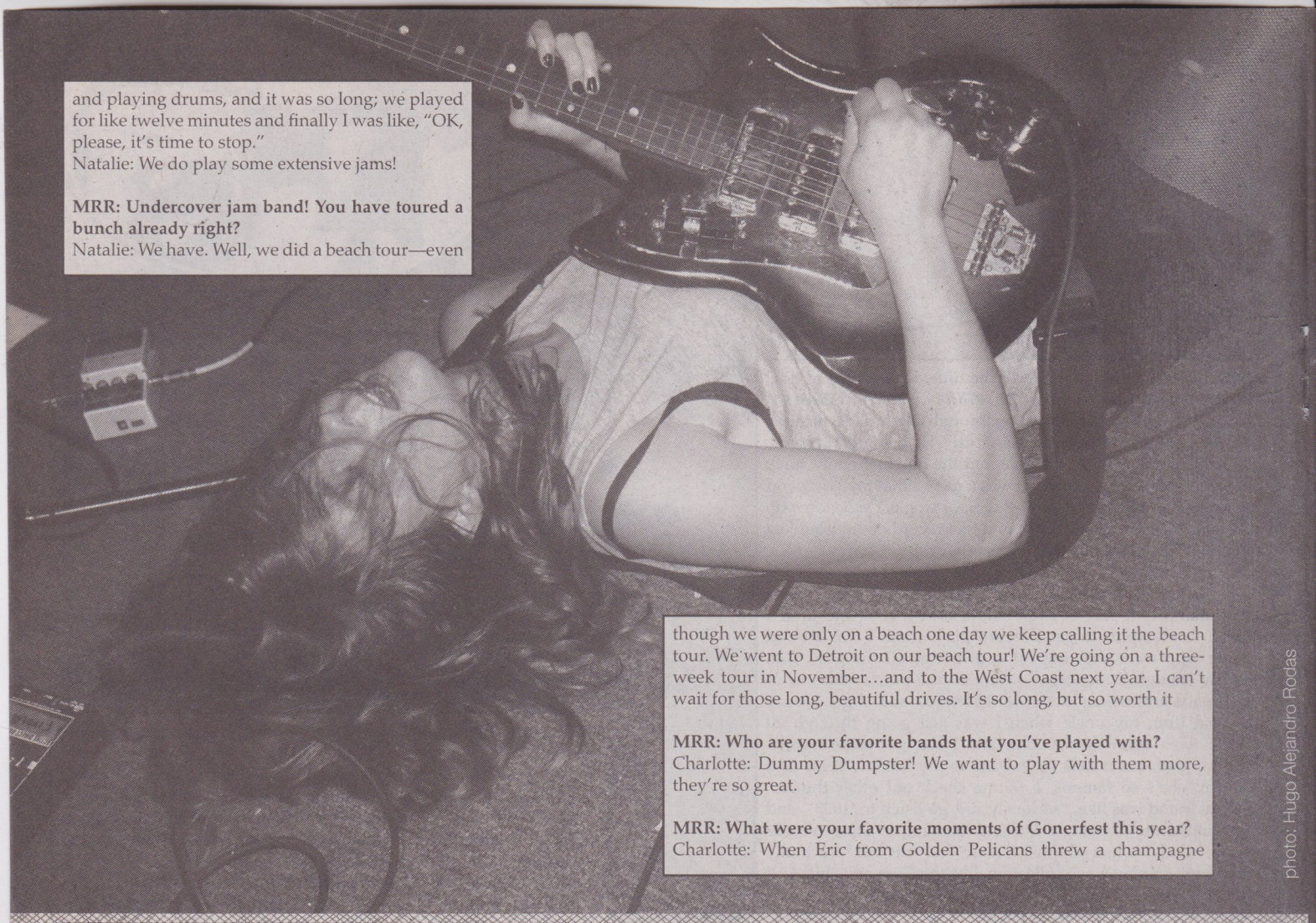
Natalie: The record comes out November 11th. We were supposed to be in [the studio] for a week straight, but I think it ended up being a week altogether but scattered. The album is interesting; it's a hybrid of a lot of things. We went through some pretty extensive line-up changes between the second single coming out and the album being recorded. Namely, our drummer quit and Charlotte moved to drums, and we added Allie on synth, so that influenced how we were writing songs. But I had been working on some of the songs on the album pretty much since the second single came out, through all the line-up changes. Some we wrote collaboratively and practiced, but it was all under a pretty immense amount of stress. Madison jumped on and did a fucking great job learning all of our old songs super quickly and writing new ones with us. Basically we had a recording deadline that we wanted to keep, and all the line-up changes happened but we didn't want to keep pushing the album back so we just went for it.

Charlotte: Some of it was written right before we recorded.

Allie: I joined the band in April, right before the drummer quit. The very first time Charlotte, Natalie, and I got together just to try it out—you know, because I was reluctant; I mean I had never played keyboard before—we wrote "Insect Eyes" and it was just this stoned eight-minute jam that we recorded on a phone and then structured it into a song. It took a while because it was the most nerve-wracking neurotic song...There were a few songs like that, where we just jammed out, then structured it out afterwards and had 'em ready to record when we were in the studio. That first phone jam was really good!

Charlotte: Yeah, the first time we were playing Natalie had that riff, and it was the middle of the afternoon and I was drinking Coca-Cola

photo: leah hunt



and playing drums, and it was so long; we played for like twelve minutes and finally I was like, "OK, please, it's time to stop."
Natalie: We do play some extensive jams!

MRR: Undercover jam band! You have toured a bunch already right?
Natalie: We have. Well, we did a beach tour—even though we were only on a beach one day we keep calling it the beach tour. We went to Detroit on our beach tour! We're going on a three-week tour in November…and to the West Coast next year. I can't wait for those long, beautiful drives. It's so long, but so worth it

MRR: Who are your favorite bands that you've played with?
Charlotte: Dummy Dumpster! We want to play with them more, they're so great.

MRR: What were your favorite moments of Gonerfest this year?
Charlotte: When Eric from Golden Pelicans threw a champagne bottle over everybody, and it landed on the stage and bounced and made this insane sound. I was standing behind Kurt from No Bails and Abe from Manateees and I was ready to hit the deck. It could have just shattered all over everybody, and I'm glad it didn't, but it was fun. People were popping balloons while we were playing and it's kind of a sound that's always scared me so I just had to get over it.
Natalie: I saw Life Stinks, and I hadn't seen them before and I really liked them. I unfortunately had to work during a lot of Gonerfest, so I didn't get to party as hard as I wanted to, but I got to go to their afternoon show and it was really great. We saw Quintron's new band, Weather Warlock, they were totally insane…

MRR: If you could play with three bands from any era, who would you pick?
Charlotte: Parliament-Funkadelic? Wait, I wanna do this really quickly because it'll be good. Um, Madonna? Or is that too much?
Natalie: MC5.
Allie: Stooges!
Natalie: Wait, we have to pick more chicks because a lot of these dudes are just assholes! The Slits!

MRR: What are your current favorite bands? Who would you want to play with if you could?
Charlotte: Live I don't think anyone can fuck with the Spits. They are just the best.
Natalie: Spider!
Charlotte: Yeah, Spider, but do they ever play shows?
Natalie: I don't know if they've ever played shows, but they've always been one of my favorites!
Charlotte: And Golden Pelicans. They're just really fun to play with.
Natalie: Quintron and Miss Pussycat rule. And it's always fun to hang out with them.
Charlotte: We played with Human Eye in Detroit and that was the best, so much fun.
Natalie: Timmy's Organism too, I love them. There's a local band we play with a lot that I really like, called Gimp Teeth. They put on a great show. We've been playing at a video rental place called Black Lodge and that's been really cool…

Nots' first LP We Are Nots *is now available from Goner Records.*

photo: Hugo Alejandro Rodas

photos: leah hunt

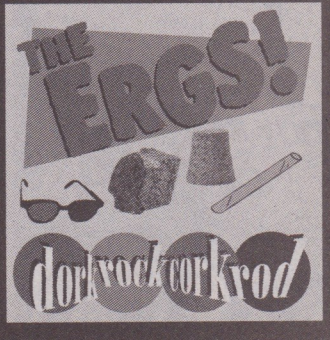
Don Giovanni Records

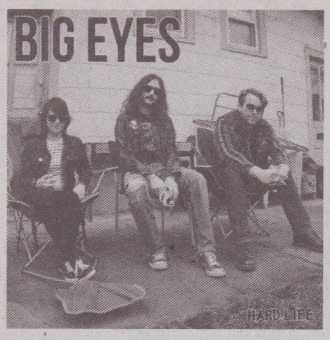
I played one of my first out of town basement shows in New Brunswick in the late '90s. The second we stepped into the basement of 331 Somerset, a house that launched the likes of Thursday, the Assistant, and a host of other seminal bands, I felt a pulse and a magic that would remain with me long after we left the college city. I was happy to discover, years later, that the pulse of inspiration that struck me back then was alive and well, exemplified in large part by Don Giovanni Records. Home to Screaming Females, the Ergs!, Waxahatchee, Priests, the Measure [SA], and more, this label, run by Joe Steinhardt, was fanning the flames of DIY culture and spirit. He shows no signs of slowing down, with releases from bands like Downtown Boys and Pinkwash on the horizon. I took some time to talk with Joe Steinhardt about his work running this label. Introduction and interview by Katy Otto. Photos provided by Don Giovanni Records.

MRR: Give us a little background on your history with music.
I grew up with no music in the house. The first time I decided to "get into music" was because I hoped it would help me fit in better, since I had trouble making friends. It didn't work. I got into DIY music when I moved to New Jersey for high school and someone told me about stuff happening in New Brunswick. It was there I discovered some of my favorite bands of all time, like the Degenerics.

MRR: Were you into any other New Brunswick bands? The Assistant? Thursday? Stormshadow? Scarlet Letter?
Stormshadow very much so, also Fanshen. Scarlet Letter and the Assistant were really huge to me, too, but a few years after I had discovered those other bands. Those local bands were among the first bands that really felt important to me. I remember thinking there was something really special about ordering the Try.Fail. Try demo from a dorm room at Rutgers. Or bands like Worthless having a Rutgers email address. Incredibly novel, obviously, but when I was younger the idea that the bands I was listening to were people, not rock stars, really spoke to me. The accessibility of some of my favorite bands at that time, in a way that wasn't exploitive of my fandom, is something I still think about a lot and something really powerful about DIY in general. It seems like a lot of independent labels, and especially major labels, seek to take advantage of a fan's genuine excitement around the bands they feel connected to through overpriced "limited" collectables or contests aimed at promoting the artist with nothing substantial in return for the fan, stuff like that. That's not what community is. I try to think back to my earliest, most naïve days when I make decisions about the label, and try to focus on things that build meaning, rather than create profit.

MRR: What were your favorite labels when you were first discovering music? Did you look to those to get interested in new bands?
Before the internet, I would essentially study and memorize mail order catalogs from labels like Lookout, Mutant Pop, Ebullition, and almost anything I could get my hands on. Basically anything with an ad in the back of *MRR* was something I felt like I needed to know about. Musical discovery for me back then was less about being cutting edge and finding out about new bands, and more about figuring out ways to listen to stuff I would read about that was supposed to be good. It took me a while to catch up to where I was trying to listen to new releases.





MRR: When did you decide to start a record label and why?

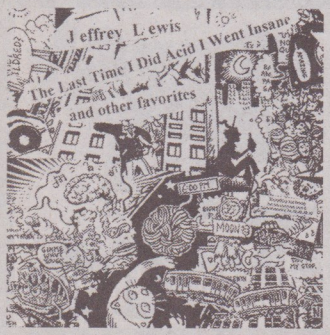
The first time I thought about releasing music from a band it almost felt like out of duty. There was this band called Fortunato from New Brunswick who made what is still one of my favorite EPs, and when I found out it wouldn't be on vinyl, I really wanted one so desperately that I asked them if I could put it out. They didn't trust a 16-year-old to release it—and who could blame them!—so it never happened. With Don Giovanni, I had always wanted to self-release something, so when I got a band together in college it was almost a forgone conclusion. I somehow convinced my friend Zach, who was in the band with me and who I also do the label with, to help me.

MRR: How is Don Giovanni impacted by where you live? What has New Jersey meant to the label?

I don't think I would be doing a label if I were from somewhere else. Outside of self-releasing, nothing about running a record label really appealed to me when I was younger. But there weren't really labels in New Jersey putting out the bands I was listening to and trying to share them with the world the way there were for other scenes, like No Idea in Gainesville, Lookout in Berkeley, Discord in DC, etc. I don't think I realized that this mattered until I left for college and discovered that no one outside of the New Jersey area had heard of most of the bands that meant so much to me. So, it really just seemed like there was a need for one, and then I also ended up being good at whatever it meant to run a label.

MRR: How long have you been doing the label at this point? Did you think the project would become what it has?

It has been a little over eleven years at this point—and definitely not. And not in that way where I assumed it would fail. Just that there was no plan to really "do a label," just to self-release, and then eventually help some of my friends' bands out.

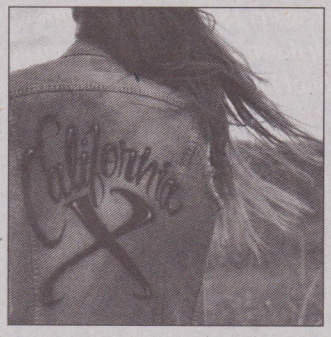


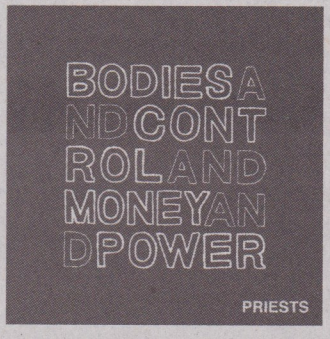
MRR: Did you ever have specific goals with the label?

Once we started taking the label seriously, it felt like there was a clear goal to be able to do what bigger, and often less independent, labels were doing for their bands, but with our bands and on our own terms. To try to give our artists the freedom that can be harder to find at larger labels, but still providing them with the resources and benefits of those labels. That is still a main focus of the label, but now that includes things like books and art, in addition to music.

MRR: What has proven most difficult about doing a record label that releases physical products in an increasingly digital age?

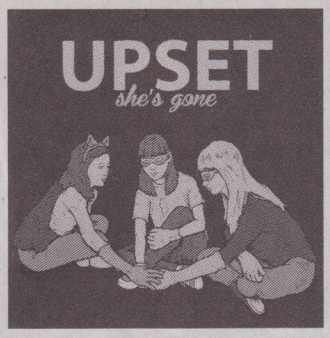
Trying to help create meaningful releases when the focus seems to be so heavily on transitory releases designed to keep bands (or brands) relevant and in the blogosphere. The internet also seems to have the power to basically make bands blow up overnight, which ends up incentivizing an attitude in bands where if they *don't* blow up overnight on their first album, they give up. Or an attitude of "we'll tour or do things after the album gets hype." Both of which lead to really interesting bands ending up largely unheard in favor of the type of bland and more generic bands that can quickly find an audience.





MRR: What labels and artists do you look towards for inspiration?

When we started, the early days of labels like Lookout, Dischord, Gern Blandsten, and Polyvinyl felt really inspirational in terms of how we wanted to go about certain things. They seemed focused not only on documenting their local scenes, but also sharing them with the world. I think what I liked about all these labels was that they figured out their own way to do things that worked for them and their bands. More recently, as the label has grown, I've taken a lot of inspiration from how Moses Asch ran Folkways and his dedication to keeping things in print and documenting really important music,



even when the music is completely non-commercial in nature. As for current labels, I really like the way labels like Katorga Works and Sister Polygon operate. I think too many labels these days are too focused on curating an aesthetic or making collectables rather than focusing on more meaningful goals.

MRR: Does the label have a particular ethos or mission?
Supporting truly independent artists and trying to give them the freedom and resources to be able to create their records. Trying to provide an alternative to the mainstream of independent music and punk in the same way they try to provide an alternative to the mainstream of whatever else.

MRR: What does punk mean to you? Do you consider your label a punk label?
A lot of people tell me our bands aren't punk bands and that Don Giovanni is not a punk label because they feel like punk has to sound a certain way. That used to bother me a lot, but I think I care a lot less now. The "meaning" of punk is a more interesting question. Everyone has their own definition, and in some ways that lack of definition is what's so important about punk as a movement. For me, I think I was originally attracted to punk for what I feel like now were the wrong reasons. Originally, I was attracted to punk because it gave me this kind of space to be angry, offensive, sometimes violent, and basically a jackass to people, but in this way where it felt okay because we were all letting off steam and all part of some kind of community where we all agreed this was our space to act this way.

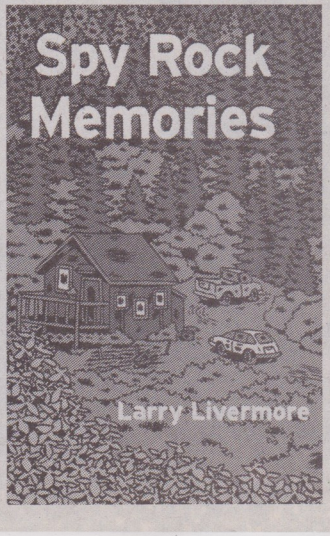
But what kept me in punk after I became a little more mature is what I feel is more important about punk as a movement. Sure, punk can provide the space and the platform to be violent and offensive, but it can also provide a platform for change and a space for learning from people much smarter than yourself and interacting with them directly. This is what makes punk important to me. I wish this was something I had discovered and appreciated when I was younger, but it's something I probably wouldn't have discovered in life at all if I hadn't gotten into punk in the first place.

MRR: Do you think there is value in political punk today? Do you see it a lot? What do you wish was different?
I'm surprised and a bit disappointed by the lack of political punk today. Sure, it exists, but it feels like it should be omnipresent. There are people being murdered by the police without repercussions due to the color of their skin, the government is working with some of the largest corporations in the country to spy on us, socioeconomic inequality in this country is as at an all-time high, and yet, it seems like punk bands are singing about getting high and drinking beer and hardcore bands are focused more on cultivating some kind of dark, borderline-sketchy imagery. I don't get it. Music is powerful. Words are powerful. It shocks me that there aren't more powerful political voices coming out of punk and hardcore and, for that matter, even from the mainstream.

MRR: What is the worst part of running a label to you?
Trying to convince artists not to read what people are writing about them.

MRR: What is next on the horizon for Don Giovanni?
Early in the year, new albums from California X, Screaming Females, Tenement (finally), and new albums from most of our other bands by the end of the year, including debut albums from Downtown Boys and Pinkwash, and a new album from Mal Blum.

See dongiovannirecords.com for information on all Don Giovanni releases past and present.



THE SPLITS
CRIMINAL CODE
S.H.I.T.
THE NUMBER ONES
FRAU
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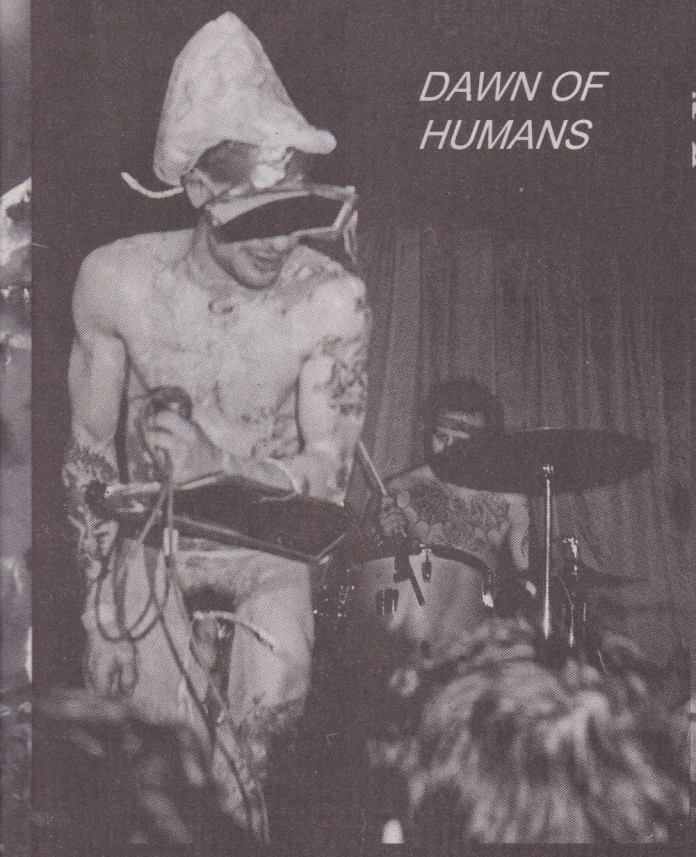

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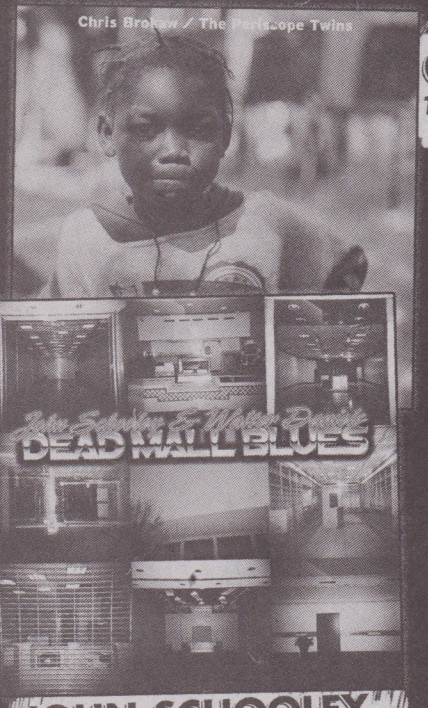

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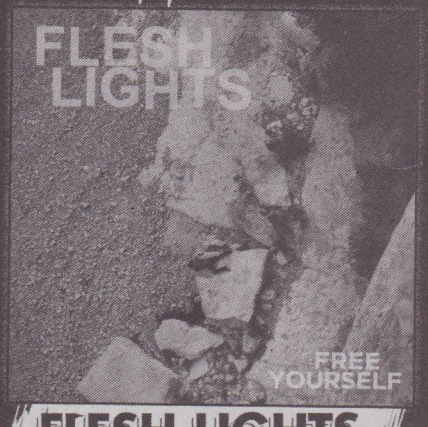
DEAD MALL BLUES LP

CHRIS BROKAW
THE PERISCOPE TWINS 2XLP

THE GOTOBEDS
POOR PEOPLE ARE REVOLTING LP



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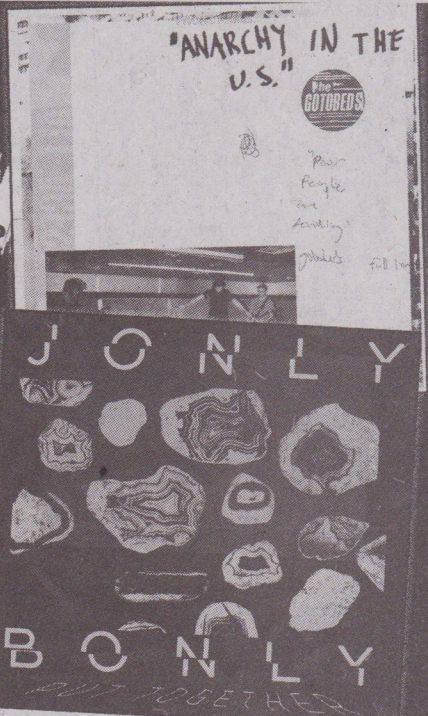

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FRAU

In May 2012, a friend was organizing a benefit gig in a long-gone squat and I suggested Frau, a new band with no songs, ready to play their first show. I told him I'd heard them (not true) and that they were gonna be pretty special (very true—in fact, I could never have predicted just how special). Since then, Frau has toured Spain (two of their number hail from Tenerife and Catalonia) and western Europe, and have become a common fixture on nearly every bill in London. Uncompromising and unpredictable, every Frau set flies in the face of staid expectations, ramshackle noise shaking up your bones. With a sound that borrows from the annals of radical woman-powered post-punk of times gone by without ever falling into rehash, where rollicking bass lines battle atonal guitars, these are insistent screeching truths forged in circles of trust. Their demo tape on Riots Not Diets Records has now been repressed more times than I can count, so steal it from someone you know. Frau are downing Jaegerbombs and spitting venom through clenched teeth, arming you with the only battle cry you ever needed:

"YOU'RE GONNA LISTEN TO ME."

Ashleigh: Vocals
Colette: Guitar
Núria: Bass
Paula: Drums

Interview and introduction by Bryony Beynon. Partial translation by Lena Tahmassian. Photos by Al Bailey, Jack Pitt, and Martin Sorrondeguy.

MRR: What do you want someone seeing you play for the first time to feel?

ASHLEIGH: Personally, I want you to be drawn in by the whole thing and I want it to be commanding. I want it to be hypnotic. I want you to let yourself go along with it. More recently it's become a performance of authority, and I want people to feel that. A lot of punk is performance, whether it's some guy pretending to be angry about wars he has nothing to do with, or people genuinely frustrated with their everyday lives, it is all performance. We don't generally, in life, lock ourselves in rooms and ask people we know to watch us stamp around, so I want it to be a performance of the things I have written about, I want to put that across.

COLETTE: This is the first band I've been in where I'm not the singer and the lyrics aren't mine so I'm thinking from another perspective. When you have good feedback it's often really humbling. Sometimes people say, "Wow, I've never seen women play music like that," which makes the reason for doing it click. I like music that is difficult and has different layers, so I want people to find the method accessible but also be challenged.

MRR: So you don't want people to get too comfortable?

COLETTE: It's more like, if I was seeing Ash for the first time I'd be like, "Fucking hell." She's scary! I mean—not that I'm not allowed to talk on stage but...

ASHLEIGH: She's not allowed to talk on stage.

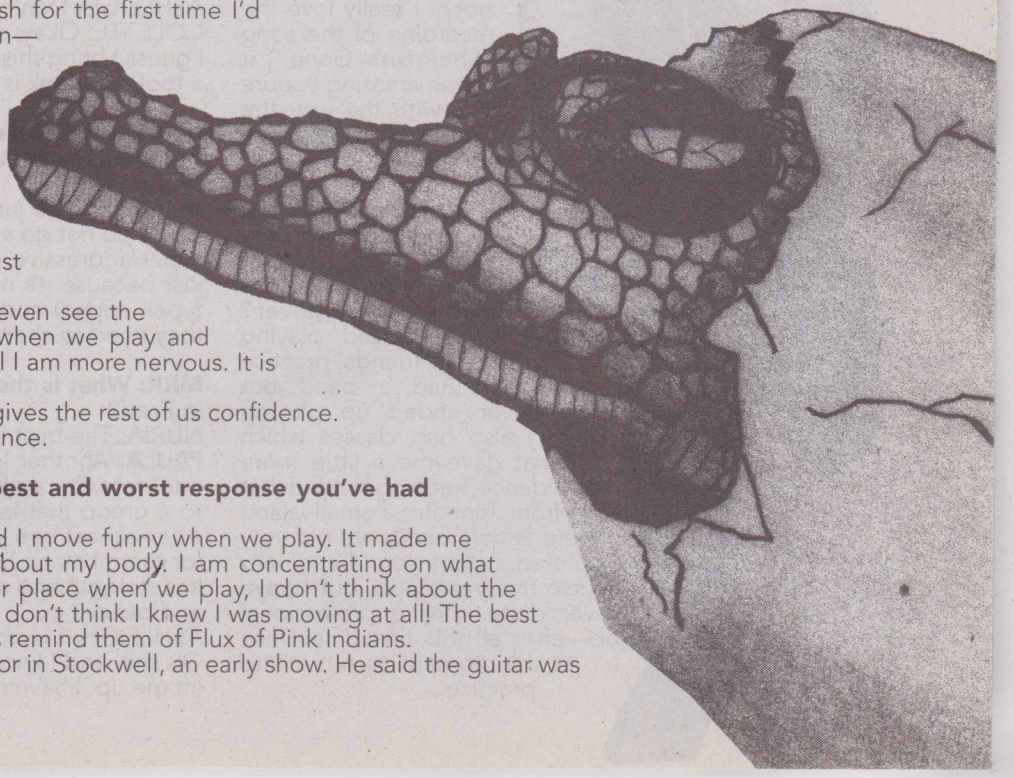
COLETTE: I run the risk of getting a very dark stare, and I kind of appreciate that I try to adapt into a submissive part of me in that situation.

ASHLEIGH: She's not submissive! She just yells through her guitar!

PAULA: As a drummer, sometimes I can't even see the audience, but I love to see people smile when we play and maybe just dancing. When they are very still I am more nervous. It is cool to have a scary singer.

COLETTE: I'm glad Ash is scary because it gives the rest of us confidence.

ASHLEIGH: I'd rather play to a hostile audience.



MRR: That's a good segue—what's the best and worst response you've had after a set?

NÚRIA: I didn't like it when I was being told I move funny when we play. It made me feel self-conscious, I don't normally think about my body. I am concentrating on what we're playing, not my body. I am in another place when we play, I don't think about the audience, but this made me feel strange—I don't think I knew I was moving at all! The best was probably someone saying my bass lines remind them of Flux of Pink Indians.

PAULA: My father saw us live at the Grosvenor in Stockwell, an early show. He said the guitar was too loud.

MRR: Daaaad!
NÚRIA: The best thing was when Colette made a little boy cry.
ASHLEIGH: She Chuck Berry-ed him.

MRR: She hit him with her guitar?!
COLETTE: It's only happened three times!
ASHLEIGH: She kicked Núria in the crotch once! When we played in St. Etienne she ran into the crowd and hit a six-year-old boy who was there with his dad. She also knocked a grown man over in Spain.

MRR: What were your feelings on deciding to learn guitar for Frau, Colette? I know you told me you'd never play a power chord for ideological reasons!
COLETTE: Playing a guitar always seemed the most appealing instrument to start with in a band. There are a few examples in punk of guitar players that I felt played in a really messy erratic, non-conventional way. There's this band Corey Orbison from Bristol and London and I always felt the way all three of them played was amazing—Michal and Irene seem to just hit their guitar/bass in different places, I guess a bit like the no wave band DNA. It makes perfect sense and is terrible chaos all at once. In terms of looking at the way Michal plays guitar, I now realize he's an incredibly proficient player and is playing jazz chords and weird riffs that the casual observer would just see as nonsense. Also Jaume, the guitarist in Orden Mundial, the way he plays is crazy. I love their new LP so much, just for how exciting the guitar sound is. All of the guitar playing on the first Frau tape is open chords with basic progressions, I dunno, that just seemed an easy way to play loud, full chords akin to the sound I wanted to make. I got a lot of "That song only has one chord?!!!" and my response was "Why not?" I really love the recording of the song "Sherman's Gone," it has an amazing texture to it with the way the guitar sound shrills in and out.

MRR: Paula, when did you first learn to play drums? I am right in thinking you are also a trained sound engineer?
PAULA: I started playing drums in my friends' practice spaces, I had a band but we never ended up playing live. I also had classes which is what gave me a little more confidence, keeping in mind that I'm from Tenerife, a small island where female bands are not very common. I did a sound engineer course five years ago, but I have never done it as a professional job—after all this time I feel like it's the moment to put it into practice.

MRR: What about you Núria?
NÚRIA: About ten years ago I bought my first and only bass. I spent the first years practicing in my room. Finally, I started a grind band with some friends and we released a tape that nobody bought.
PAULA: The best comment we had actually was a guy saying he couldn't figure out if Colette just couldn't play, or was a total genius. She is a genius.
ASHLEIGH: The nicest thing, and it is usually women, is they say it's really genuine. When we played in Zurich, loads of women asked me how I could be so powerful. It was weird, I didn't really know how to answer. I eventually said to them, "You have to think big." Like physically, you need to imagine that you are bigger. I am five foot tall so most people are bigger than me, but when I playing I feel like I am fifty feet tall, but generally I try to live in a mindset of having a bit of an attitude because I have small man syndrome, haha.

MRR: Does anyone want to mention the worst response they've have?
ASHLEIGH: Well, something that stuck in my mind quite a lot that comes to mind now is that someone once referred to us as "more of an art band." For me, this really wasn't an acceptable thing. If you want to dismiss us, fine, if you don't want us to be part of your punk scene, fine, but art?
COLETTE: What's wrong with art?
ASHLEIGH: We're not an "art band," we are a fucking punk band and how dare anyone punk disregard us. I find that fucking offensive.
COLETTE: I guess I'm less bothered about the word "art" itself, more just what is meant by this, that someone will dismiss us as being relevant because we're not fitting into a very narrow conception of what a hardcore band is or should be.
ASHLEIGH: It's just a dismissal, so lazy, it's a way to not even have to engage or deal with us as a punk band, it positions us outside of the scene by saying we're "art." What about us is not punk?
COLETTE: Ugh, I think I sometimes we can dwell on this stuff too much, and we do have to remind ourselves that this sort of viewpoint tends to be said by people who benefit from the status quo of a conventional punk scene, where men and straight people are plenty. I really like that women and queer people are drawn to our band, but that we also play lots of different types of shows. One of my friends joked that the reason Frau sometimes goes down well on a straight-up punk bill is because we have a kick drum beat that dumb men can nod along to…
ASHLEIGH: Don't say dumb men…
COLETTE: Okay, someone with dumb taste can nod along to. I guess I bring this up because it's an interesting tool, like art is a tool and punk is a tool.

MRR: Regardless of the genre, making even the most rudimentary "anti-art" band is technically still creating art though right?
ASHLEIGH: It's just about letting people define themselves! Like, I do not go around saying to people "Yeah, so how's that super aggressive, masculine-sounding music going for you?" just because it's not quite to my taste. I love hardcore, some types appeal and some don't, but I don't tell other people they need to change their style for my benefit.

MRR: What is the biggest lesson you've learnt from being in Frau?
NÚRIA: The best thing to do is do something by yourself.
PAULA: Another lesson is it doesn't matter if a song just has one note, it can be amazing. I feel very fortunate to belong to a group that is not lacking in affection, trust, and respect. After almost two years I have learned that the love that I feel for them has no limits and I have also learned that this group has strength and a lot of rage, ready to fight for what we think and believe in.
ASHLEIGH: I learnt the phrase "*eres un pedaso de mierda.*" Oh shit, and I know it's lame, but sisterhood. These girls, they lift me up. I have never felt more comfortable with anyone.

NÚRIA: You saved my life. Thanks to them I survived.
COLETTE: Yeah, sisterhood. The phrase sounds a bit dated culturally now but it is this special type of female friendship. Being in a band is a different type of friendship.
ASHLEIGH: The struggle is powerful too, the struggle to create something together when you are already friends or you become friends, it is a next level thing and it's so much deeper.
COLETTE: It's like, you're playing, as we did, supporting Los Crudos, playing for hundreds of people with their fucking arms folded. We did that together, you have to have each other's backs to have the confidence to even get on that stage. I feel like the last few years the DIY scene in London has been incredible for sisterhood and queer solidarity. All the female and queer presences at the front in shows—at that Crudos gig, the Hysterics gig in Brighton, that Las Otras gig—it was just amazing, this new power I've never felt in the scene before.
ASHLEIGH: There are a lot of women in London that are so amazing, we definitely feel connected to all of them.

MRR: That definitely leads me on to my next question, about your respective feminisms. You all identify as feminists amongst other things, and it would be interesting to know how you feel being in Frau has developed your opinions on this?
COLETTE: There are so many problems within even addressing a third-wave or progressive feminism in radical spheres and punk and I think a lot about these words, but I've been thinking recently how feminist is one of the words I won't ever detach myself from. A lot of my friends shy away from it because they feel the word queer is better for them, but for me feminism is unquestionable. Frau has been a confirmation that I just prefer making music with women, and that it's just the best thing I can engage with in life.

MRR: Do you feel that you all have different takes on feminism?
COLETTE: Only sometimes, yes—Paula and I had an interesting argument the other day about whether men can be feminists, which I think they can.
PAULA: For me, men do not have the same struggle.
ASHLEIGH: I think I was always a feminist as a young girl, but my real introduction to it came through my A-level film tutor called Nada—one of our songs is named after her—she was so powerful and passionate. I have always tried to be quite rational, though, so being in Frau has given me the opportunity to learn from these women's experiences, and take on some aspects of them. I guess an example is Paula has really encouraged me not to question my anger, she will remind me that hating something and being fucking angry is really good. I have that within me but I tend to stamp it down, it turns into self-hatred, whereas they've shown me to embrace that hatred, that it's okay to be that angry. I have always been this angry but I've been taught to aim it at myself. Being around them makes me remember this.
PAULA: Thanks to the fact that each of us is coming from the same scene, I have never felt that my ideas have been put into question, and we are in agreement on the basic issues. My struggle is situated within a political vision that is opposed to all relations of forceful power in which patriarchy is seen, obviously, as a form of authoritarianism. In the day-to-day, direct action and self-sufficiency are our tools, we do things on our own, we confront incidents that make us feel uncomfortable, we are in charge of our own bodies, we decide openly about our sexuality, we don't tolerate violence towards us and we fight for this. We know that mutual support is fundamental, the small differences that might exist between us are not an obstacle, but on the contrary help me learn and value what my female friends feel.

MRR: Ash, can you explain the meaning behind "Hostile" and "Safety Instructions," my two favorite songs?
ASHLEIGH: "Hostile" is about not labelling angry children. I work with really young children, some with emotional behavioral difficulties, some with autism spectrum disorder and other learning needs—I've got scars from these kids, then later shared biscuits and games with them (as well as teaching them!). I'd never call one of them hostile, but we live in a world that treats them as a risk and I hate that. "Safety Instructions" is my first love song! I broke up with a boy and remember being sat on a train looking at the safety instructions on the seat in front feeling that heartache kind of sick. It's about feeling a huge need to protect someone and make everything easy for them, and knowing really that you can't, there are no instructions for that kind of thing.

MRR: It'd be cool to talk about tour and your experiences of it. How did going to Spain compare to the other Europe?
NÚRIA: I enjoyed every gig, every night. Every gig was special.
PAULA: I have good memories of the Spanish tour because my sister drove us!
COLETTE: Miriam is so cool and strong. Now when I am feeling unsure of what I'm doing, I think of her and imagine her telling me, "What the fuck are you afraid of?"
NÚRIA: We met the guys from Asesinato del Poder because they set up a show on the Spanish tour, and then we ended up doing the whole of Europe with them.
ASHLEIGH: It was a bit awkward when we first met because Colette and I do not speak Spanish and none of Asesinato boys speak too much English, but we communicated through punk. I actually had a really embarrassing incident at that show, Paula was outside still trying to park the van, and I was inside trying to set the drum kit up, having never set one up before. All these boys, none of whom spoke any English, are like politely trying to help me and I am generally terrible at accepting help, so I'm there like, "Don't touch it! I can do it! I don't need a man to help me!" I am literally patting their

hands away and frowning, and obviously couldn't do it and I felt weird about it. Then when I actually spoke to them, they are the most childish, stupid baby boys ever and I love them, they are so amazing. Their band is incredible.
COLETTE: They all got Frau tattoos! I loved tour but you do get a bit worn out halfway through for some reason! I was a bit tired, a bit sad, and a bit of an ungrateful bastard and kept having to tell myself to shut up. Spain was so good. The main thing I took away from that experience was getting a glimpse of the amazing network of DIY in Spain. In the UK we have a punk scene, and you know, yeah, it's DIY in the way we organize, but it can be, you know, in a *Vice*-run venue or whatever, whereas in Spain, the full spirit is DIY, it's political, people have been so creative about building things. It made me think when our friend Jokin from the Basque country who is living here said that in London, it's "harder to be an outlaw," it makes sense.
ASHLEIGH: They take a *lot* of risks.

MRR: Is this because laws there are more lax, or because there is a culture of risk-taking that we don't have here as punks?
PAULA: In English culture everything feels more polite, it's like you respect the laws. We have no respect for the law. We do not respect authority. We pee in the street, you know?
ASHLEIGH: We piss in the street...if we're really drunk. Colette pissed in the street on tour, she said she normally only "does bushes" though…
COLETTE: Paula, you don't even sit on the toilet, that's how much you don't respect authority. Núria, how do you feel about toilets?
NÚRIA: In Barcelona, being in the punk and DIY scene means squatting, stealing, being against authority. Punks in Spain are ruder, dirtier, and illegal. It really surprised me here that almost all the gigs are in pubs, that people don't seem to steal.
PAULA: I find that the punk scene in London, in general terms, is less political than in Spain. The scarcity of social centers and squatted places makes it so that punk bands have to mostly play in bars, which are not related to DIY projects. Also, it seems to me that this city is different in that money is not a problem. People pay to get into shows, even if the prices are kind of high, and this is inevitably a product of the economic situation. Here, people respond, and although they aren't that politically committed, they do collaborate, which makes it possible to gather funds for projects. One of the things that I value most about the London scene is the marvelous queer scene that it has, which is constantly growing and forging a path through the deep patriarchal roots of punk.
ASHLEIGH: Our friend Ines said to me that she feels the punk scene in the UK is very academic, which was interesting, like everyone has degrees, or is thinking stuff through instead of just doing it.

MRR: As if it's like "here's my chosen cultural interest" rather than an impulse or a worldview. That makes a lot of sense to me. Núria and Paula, is London a hard place to live compared to where you grew up, and how have you found your experiences as immigrants here?
NÚRIA: I grew up in a boring, quiet town next to Barcelona and when I could I moved to the city. Barcelona is an easy place to live in comparison to London, at least, when I was there. The weather is usually good, the distances are short, and I had no problem finding recycled food, clothes or furniture. In this city, I found the long distances really hard. That, and how expensive everything is, but this is something that I have to accept if I want to enjoy the rest. As a legal immigrant too, I think that the language is the first barrier that you can find. It's frustrating to not understand or to not be understood. After two years here I still have loads of problems trying to express myself properly. (If I can't do it in Spanish, imagine in English...) Also, since I'm here I'm more alone than I used to be. I think that the rhythm of the city pushes you to be a loner.
PAULA: London is an enormous city that I love and hate at the same time. Thanks to the quantity of immigrants here, I have never really felt discriminated against, but when I've had to express myself or have serious conversations, or when I've tried to find "decent" jobs I have felt some frustration. The language is a barrier that has impeded me in expressing my true self. In Spanish, I am funny and I crack jokes; in English, I am somewhat more shy.

MRR: My last question is this: What would you say to a young woman coming to her first punk gig who wants to get involved and start a band?
NÚRIA: Pick up the instrument and start to make a noise.
PAULA: I would say, because I come from Tenerife which is a tiny island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, it was so hard to do an all-girl band, just grab an instrument and don't expect to be approved of. Sometimes you're afraid to not play well, you feel you are being watched by men. You feel the urge to demonstrate you know how to play, just resist that pressure. Find friends and do it.
NÚRIA: And if you don't have any friends, call me.
COLETTE: Use that fear and pressure and turn it into your energy. Use it—"Fuck this, I don't fit in and this is what I've got to say about it." You truly can pick up any instrument, as scary as that sounds. Compared to the conventional standards I can't play guitar at all but I am still doing this.
ASHLEIGH: Your guitar playing is beautiful.
COLETTE: I can't walk into a guitar shop and try something out though can I?

MRR: Never go to guitar shops is also good advice.
ASHLEIGH: I would tell them to think big. Think that you are the biggest person in the room and you will be her. When it comes to punk, you don't have to be in a band to feel big. It's not about what you do, it's how you feel. When I first started in my first band I said, "Okay guys, I'll do it but I will never play live" and now here we are, several years later, with a few bands and tours, one of which I sing in that that has made me feel really powerful. Try doing a band and if it feels even remotely good or even fucking terrifying, remember that it's scary for a reason and keep going. Doing a band isn't the only thing you can do to feel powerful. Put on a gig and try standing right at the front, make your presence felt and take up the space you deserve because you deserve to fucking be there. You deserve to watch what you want, to make the sounds that you want. This is your world so be a fucking part of it.

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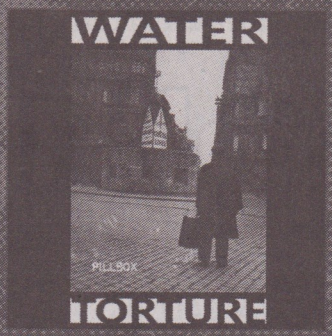

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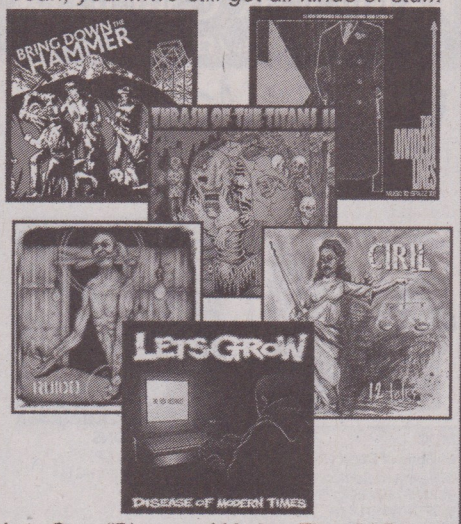

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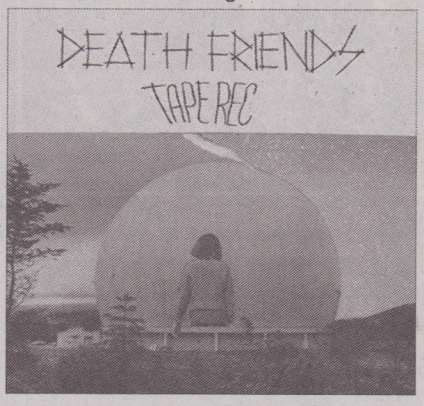

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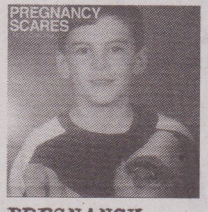

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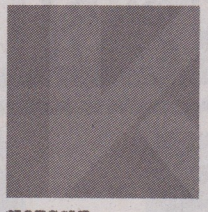
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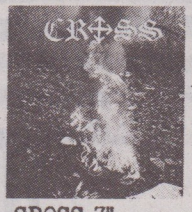

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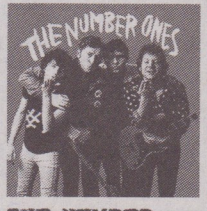

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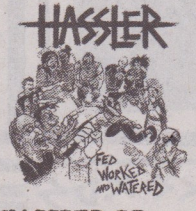

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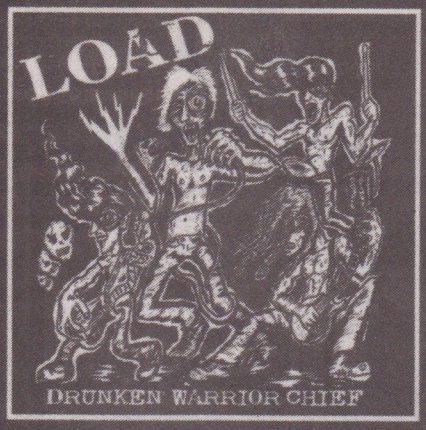

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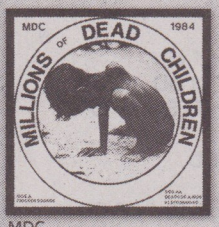

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1981 was a heavy and depressing year in Poland. Protests and massive strikes by the unionists of Solidarność (Solidarity) became a real threat to the status quo. In response, the authoritarian Polish government declared martial law: arrests, military presence on the streets, censorship, curfews, food stamps, TV presenters in military uniforms on TV; no fun. Poland was getting really close to a civil war and no one was sure if the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries would use this situation as an excuse to cross the Polish borders, like they did in Czechoslovakia in 1968. All the Polish punks became aware of a new meaning for the classic slogan "no future."

Against this background the second wave of Polish Punk appeared, faster, more direct and angrier than before. One of these bands was TZN Xenna. One of their first songs was "Paranoja '81"—a new anthem for a lost generation. This band reached cult status among their fans and always had a big following of punks, outcasts and troublemakers. Only a few vinyl releases document '80s Polish punk and hardcore. TZN Xenna were lucky enough to put out the classic Dzieci Z Brudnej Ulicy 7" and two songs on the Jak Punk To Punk compilation LP before they quit in 1987.

It was such a surprise to hear about their decision to reunite in 2011. Their first show in Warsaw in over 25 years was really impressive, drawing around 800 people. This band was my early punk rock education and when they asked me and my friend Pepus to put out their comeback 7" 1981-2011 I couldn't resist. Later on we did another 7" and most recently the Czart PRLu full length LP on Refuse Records and TZN Annex Records, the label run by Pepus focused only on TZN Xenna releases only.

This band still rocks, still questioning reality and still playing on the same level. General Jaruzelski just died recently but TZN Xenna is still raging.

We talked with Zygzak (vocals), Kesur (guitar) and Panek (bass) about the past and the present. Interview and introduction by Robert Refuse. Translation from Polish and notes in italics by Krzysztof. Photos by Pepus, Pani Kasia, and unknown others.

TZN XENNA :: Poland Punks

MRR: Could you reach back to the beginnings of the band? Under what circumstances did TZN Xenna come to life? Where did the interest in punk rock come from in the times of the "deep PRL[1]" anyway?

Zygzak: Those are prehistoric times, but if you insist...The band was founded on August 1, 1981, the same August during which many things happened that would change Poland's history forever. It was the first year of the legal "Solidarity." Strikes; columns of the militia on the streets, protests and barricades. Amongst all that, us; young people, looking for their place on Earth. We knew each other from Remont, a club in Warsaw where you could listen to live punk rock. The bands that played there didn't really fit our idea of punk. We decided to change that by forming TZN Xenna. Where did our interest in punk come from? Punk rock was the best thing that could happen to me during that time. Slogans had become worn-out, and the hippie subculture of the time, immersed in the haze of psychedelia, was flying off to regions that I couldn't understand. The heroes of hard rock weren't winding up my soul. I didn't need long, twisted solos and darkness in my life. Punk rock, based on rock'n'roll's raw energy: that was it.

MRR: Looking back from today's perspective, how do you remember that first period of activity?

Zygzak: Whenever I think of that time, I smile. During the first year we were trying to determine the line-up and we also played some shows. There weren't many of them; they were mostly in Warsaw. The only one outside of the city was during the New Wave Festival in Torun. It didn't contribute to our popularity.

Panek: Unfortunately, due to life's wicked ways, I missed the group's beginnings, but I can offer my opinion, being an observant listener. When TZN Xenna came to be they were at the forefront of punk's second wave—a very raw, powerful, in your face, energetic, not-giving-a-fuck, thanks-to-no-fucker kind of punk, describing the pain, anxiety, desolation, lack of any future or hope and dissatisfaction with the socialist reality that awaited them. Musically it was very much different than the first-wave punk/new wave/reggae fusion that most Polish underground groups played at the time. They also had the looks—the crew looked like orthodox London punks. It was surreal and unimaginable to some that this was happening in the fumes of deep, oppressive and often absurd communism.

1 PRL - Polska Rzeczpospolita LudowaThe Polish People's Republic; 1944-1989

MRR: Many people from abroad who are fascinated with old Polish punk and hardcore are intrigued by the fact that bands could release their material on state-run record labels, despite communism and censorship. You managed to release a 7" and have your tracks appear on the *Jak Punk to Punk* compilation. Can you tell us how the records came to being?

Zygzak: I think those people forget that, during the '80s in Poland, people were struggling and fighting for freedom and the government was slowly giving in in various ways. People employed at record companies didn't completely like the socialist state that gave them their jobs. They too were thinking about changing this fossil of a publishing system, which was based on a few artists alone. With that kind of person you could work out a compromise, which was satisfactory to everyone. That's what happened.

MRR: TZN Xenna was a band that wasn't afraid of singing powerful and uncompromising lyrics. How, despite censorship, were you able to sing lyrics like "Oficer, polityk, czy ksiądz, bankier—to chuje są" ("An officer, a politician, or priest, a banker—they're pricks"), "Pierdoleni politycy" ("Fucking politicians") or "Demokracja w czarnych okularach" ("Democracy in black glasses")[2]?

Zygzak: We quickly figured out that censorship, the real one, controlled large concerts and festivals that we weren't invited to anyway. Live shows in small clubs were also subject to censorship, but the censors couldn't be bothered to come to every gig that was happening in the city. That way we sang whatever we wanted, not caring about eventual consequences, because they never happened. Even when we played in the Congress Hall[3] in Warsaw, we played the song "Politicians"[4], to the surprise of the organizers. After the show they threatened us a little, but from what they were saying, they were more afraid for themselves than us. They were also in danger because they let us perform songs that the censor prohibited us from playing during the show.

MRR: The festival in Jarocin was the biggest event for Polish punk in the '80s. Dezerter, Moskwa and Siekiera gave performances that entered the history books. For those bands and many others that played there, the festival was a key event in their careers. TZN Xenna is one of the few Polish bands of the '80s that never played there. Were there any specific reasons for that?

Zygzak: TZN Xenna went down in history without playing at Jarocin. As you can see, you didn't always have to follow the trend. Even if the trend seems like the right one. Everybody has the right to their own decisions and we exercised that right. The Jarocin festival of the '80s was a great place to begin your musical career or become popular for a moment. But the large numbers of law enforcement officials, the militia, undercover cops and other "decent people" estranged us from that place. We were asking ourselves: what's the point of being free for three days in a year? What about daily life outside of that? Maybe I'm an idealist, but I wasn't satisfied with that ticketed freedom.

MRR: How do you recall the shows you played in the '80s? Can you mention the more interesting ones?

Zygzak: The shows we played in 1981-1987 were all different. The weirdest one was in Lomza. The local gits[5] that showed up tried to terrorize the audience and the band. But my insolent act of shoving my finger extended into the "fuck off" symbol known worldwide, right in their faces caused a rift in their ranks. Additionally, one of them started pogoing, crushing their fighting mood. The crew broke up, the show got underway in full swing, and everyone started dancing. The best shows were in Club Remont in Warsaw. That's no surprise, as it was our club. Our place on Earth that was the meeting point for a quite large contingent of Warsaw punks. This is where everyone knew one another, and that's why TZN Xenna's shows turned into one huge party with sing alongs, slam dancing and other unexpected attractions.

MRR: In 2011, after a long break, the band returned to the land of the living. I remember that Zygzak kept saying for many years that there wouldn't be a reunion. What made you come back to playing? How was the reception of the first shows?

Zygzak: There were plans to make a couple of million on this reunion but that didn't work. I don't look like Justin Bieber and the band isn't bent towards pop. I don't write sweet songs for teenagers and there's no place for us in the charts. But there are people who remembered us throughout those 27 years that we were gone and they were the reason that we came back to the stage. We played our first comeback show during the second Rock na Bagnie festival. None of us predicted that around 400 people would be watching us, dancing and singing even in the middle of a heavy rainstorm. To me, personally, that was a very important event. The atmosphere and the spontaneity of the audience and their reactions validated the decision I made. After that gig other opportunities to play turned up, and we have done around 70 shows so far.

Panek: Right from the start the reception was amazing. Some of the best, most energetic shows I've ever seen. When we play, people often go crazy in every way imaginable. When we did a show in Bielsko-Biala there were some old sewage pipes on the ceiling, so a few people reached up, grabbed onto them

...And that's why Zygzak's lyrics stick in my mind. They're down-to-earth, something that everybody can relate to. Along with other lyrics they probably had a bigger effect on me and my upbringing than school, my parents and society combined. They made me do my best to be an intelligent individual who questions reality and authority.

2 The line "black glasses" refers to the ominous, signature, ever-present facial attire of General Wojciech Jaruzelski, who was one of the masterminds of the military takeover of Poland and the introduction of martial law in December 1981.

3 Sala Kongresowa— The Congress Hall— a theater hall in the Palace of Culture and Science (which itself was a "gift" from Joseph Stalin to the people of Poland) that was used, among other events, for massive conventions of the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza or PZPR) that governed the country. TZN Xenna played a show there in 1982 in the middle of martial law, along with other bands under very surreal circumstances.

4 The chorus goes: "Fucking politicians, fucked up talk, fucking theatre, very poor actors."

5 Gits-gitowcy: "git-people," a tough and very violent subculture popular in Poland in Communist times, with its origins rooted in prison life.

and spent the show hanging upside-down like bats, while everyone else danced below them. There's definitely a lot of positive energy.

MRR: In its lyrics TZN Xenna still boldly comments on reality. Does Poland in the year 2014 meet the dreams of the generation that criticized the Communist system in the '80s and which had greater chances of self-realization after it fell? What are your modern lyrics about, what do you find disturbing in reality today? The expected freedom and democracy didn't meet your expectations?

Zygzak: After the system changed I strongly believed that everything would be better. I believed that I was in a free country where by honest work you could earn your keep. At first it was like that, but it started changing around the time when we were getting ready to join the European Union. I was running a small company and instead of growth I saw a slow decline. Fewer and fewer of my clients required my services because they were struggling with their own problems. It wasn't because of quality, but rather the lack of cash caused by the crisis. And so history ran its cycle, bringing me again to a world taken over by an economic crisis. That didn't impress me, as I grew up in a country that was in a state of permanent crisis. I only feel sorry for kids who are coming of age with the same poor start as my generation.

What are my lyrics about? I never focused on singing about the good side of life. TZN Xenna isn't about entertaining the public, although we do a musical joke from time to time ("Imieniny Pani Zosi," "Polskie Radio"). We are here to move the listeners, to cause a reaction within them in response to the lyrics they hear, to make them think about the world that surrounds us.

MRR: A lot of old bands that reunite mostly play old material and don't create anything new or interesting. In TZN Xenna's case it's different. On your new releases, old songs appear along with new material. What's the idea behind that? Aren't you concerned that lyrics that were written in the early '80s may not reflect today's reality and may be simply archaic?

Zygzak: My obligation is to document as many old songs as possible in the studio, the material that was never recorded before. I imposed this on myself because the songs we composed in the '80s are very good and have timeless lyrics. The idea of bringing together old and new was accepted by our listeners. Our setlists are a mix of past and present songs.

Tele-Kesur: I believe that a band that has reunited should progress forward, i.e. it should play new songs along with older, better-known material. It's good that TZN Xenna recorded the oldest songs in the studio. That wasn't possible in Communist times. We tried our best to make sure the sound reflected the climate of the '80s and worked well with new material. It's ironic that the older lyrics are still valid. The musical style of modern compositions doesn't stray away from songs like "Miasto" ("City") or "Ola, Ola, Ola, Lej."

Panek: Quite the contrary! You can still totally relate to the "old" lyrics, "Paranoja '81" being the best example. They didn't lose any of their meaning and power over time, unfortunately. The feelings of anxiety and dissatisfaction with reality are still present today just as they were back then.

What I love most about punk and hardcore is the raw energy that enables you to discharge every single negative emotion that you harbor inside, and the lyrics, that I find to be very reflective of my own feelings. When I go out onto the street, I don't see love and happiness all around, I see people doing their best in these hard times to earn their keep, I see crime, I see substance abuse, I see the lies pumped into people's heads by politicians, priests, and businessmen. And that's why Zygzak's lyrics stick in my mind. They're down-to-earth, something that everybody can relate to. Along with other lyrics they probably had a bigger effect on me and my upbringing than school, my parents and society combined. They made me do my best to be an intelligent individual who questions reality and authority. That's the best lesson I got out of punk—to keep a safe distance from society, and to not fall down a spiral of mindless consumerism and consumption-ism. You can work off your anxiety and dissatisfaction in order to create your own reality. That comes frwwom "old" songs—a lot of the stuff from the '80s still applies today.

The current line-up works great, we have the same inspirations behind us and that gives us the energy to keep going. We are pissed off, fast, and we want to let it all out.

MRR: Can you tell us more about the newest release? What's the story behind the album title and the title track?

Zygzak: *Czart PRLu (The Devil of the PRL)* is our second album with an enigmatic title. Who is this "czart" (or "devil") of the PRL? It's the state of mind of people who grew up in socialist times, whose mentality stays the same, even though 25 years have gone by since the system changed. We exchanged socialism for capitalism and yet people still think that everything should be the same as it was. And unfortunately they do it. Shady political agreements, cronyism, doing business "under the table." Real competition doesn't exist and everything gets taken care of through friends and the right connections. Those methods

are as if they were taken right out of the days of the PRL. In Poland, the "czar PRLuu" (charm of the PRL) is popular and many people miss those times, whereas we perceive this trend as the work of some demon that's tempting them.

The album also contains other new songs, for example "Polskie Radio" ("Polish Radio"), which is a mockery of the songs broadcast by that radio station. It doesn't satisfy all the tastes of listeners, instead focusing on music that's easy and pleasant. There's very little harder music on the air, and just like back in the '80s when they didn't play us, they still don't 30 years after.

MRR: TZN Xenna is one of the most active punk bands nowadays in Poland, regularly playing shows around the country. However, you also had the opportunity to play a few shows outside of Poland, in Germany and the UK. How do you remember those shows? Where and with whom did you play?

Zygzak: Memories from shows are a pleasant form of relaxation, but I'll deal with this subject when I'm retired! There's too much going on at the moment for me to have time to reminisce. But it's a fact that we've played around 70 shows so far. We played in Bristol and London, twice in Berlin and once in Peine (Germany, at the Hoehnie Records anniversary fest with Razzia and other bands). What's great about our gigs abroad is that people know our songs. They even try to sing them along with us. I really appreciate that, as the Polish language isn't easy.

Panek: I was the band's roadie for both UK shows and the first one in Berlin. The gig in Bristol was with Disorder and Bersicker. We didn't see Disorder as we just flew in and drove all the way from London so the crew was hungry and we went for some fish and chips. The thing I remember the most is the slippery floor of the venue. One guy fell down so hard he broke his teeth and had to be escorted out. I think an ambulance took him. The dancers definitely wound down after that, but pretty much everyone fell down on their ass once or twice. The next day the show in London at the Grosvenor was simply crazy. The room was packed; people were flying all over and I spent the gig making sure they didn't trash the monitors. The first show in Berlin took place at the large hall of the legendary Kopi 137 squat: simply an amazing place to play, great energy and great crowd. The next time TZN Xenna played in Berlin was after I became the bass player. We played at Kopi 137 again, but this time in the smaller club located downstairs called Koma F with two kickass Finnish bands: Maailmanloppu and Armless Children. The room there is very small and it's pretty much a dark and dank old basement. It was raining that day and water was seeping in through the cracks turning the floor into one big puddle of mud. We played a great show and the reception was awesome. My guitar cord is still covered in that Berlin mud, some of it also adorned my P-Bass when I got splashed.

MRR: Very often, Poland's history is used by political factions to realize their own interests, often to create nationalist or xenophobic sentiments. But that history can also be fascinating, and one of the most popular topics of the past few years has been the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. It has even become a part of pop culture, something that modern youths identify with more than any counterculture. In the early '80s TZN Xenna had the song "Warszawski Krzyz Powstanczy" that alluded to this tragic event, and Zygzak has been interested and fascinated by it for years. Zygzak, where did that interest come from? How do you perceive what's currently going on around the Uprising? Can you present your own view about the Uprising? I know that it's a little bit more critical than the mainstream interpretation.

Zygzak: Already in my childhood I was drawn to the images from the Warsaw Uprising. What interested me the most were all the young faces on the pictures and films from that time. My interest resulted in the creation of my exhibition "Pamieci i Duma" ("Remembrance and Pride") in 2008 that shows episodes from the Warsaw Uprising. What's interesting about it is that I use 1:35 scale models to reconstruct events from August, 1944. I do everything by myself, and then I pose the models and photograph them. That's how I create para-documentary pictures from the Uprising. You can see the results of my work at exhibitions and on the internet.

The Warsaw Uprising and its tragic finale are a warning and a lesson at the same time. I think the lesson here that young people should learn is that often adults use their faith and energy to fight for their own political goals, goals that are often hidden, while youngsters die for the ideals handed to them by their commanders. In the case of the Warsaw Uprising, the struggle against a hated enemy was the idea for which a lot of young people died. Unfortunately, behind their backs an ideological battle was taking place for the shape of Poland's future. The Poland that was already sold at the Yalta Conference to Stalin. It would have been better if those youngsters survived and became the country's educated post-war cadre. That's why they studied at secret universities: in order to become Poland's elite. It was the decision of their commanders to send them into battle for a Poland that was never meant to be. They explained it as their great will to fight, and that nobody would have stopped young people from taking revenge on an occupier that was losing the war. That doesn't convince me, because an order is an order, and young NCOs who were brought up in the cult of honor would never allow an arbitrary fight against the Germans.

MRR: The first new song that was released was "Kalasznikow". What exactly is the song about? Who is Doktor Zbrodnia (Doctor Crime)?

Zygzak: "Kalasznikow" is the expression of the state of mind of a lot of people who are sick of the world that surrounds them. I think that many people, myself included, sometimes have murderous thoughts. When you've had enough of stupidity and rabble, you say to yourself, "just give me a machine gun..." Fortunately most people can keep their negative emotions in check. Unfortunately, there are also those who plan their gory actions with premeditation and we can hear about them from the media. For our stage performances I came up with the character of Doktor Zbrodnia, meaning somebody who's a "guardian of righteousness".

He's a guy who is a loner fighting various misdeeds. Not the great ones, but rather daily wrongdoing happening around us, like littering in the forest, pouring toxic sewage into rivers or beating children. When I was young I was threatened with some mysterious old geezer who was supposed to come and take me away whenever I misbehaved. Doktor Zbrodnia is supposed to be that kind of mysterious character in modern times.

MRR: Please tell me about your plans for the future and a few words for the end of this interview.

Zygzak: In the near future we are planning to record and release an EP with new songs about the Warsaw Uprising. They will focus on the emotions of the people involved; on what they could be thinking and feeling during the Uprising.

Panek: Thanks to everyone who listens with an open mind. Thanks to Carin, my family and Klaus Flouride, and no thanks to the "no-fuckers." You know who you are.

Zygzak: Greetings to everyone for whom TZN Xenna isn't just another record on the shelf.

TZN Xenna's latest album, Czart PRL-u, is out on Refuse Records, refusemusic.net. Check it out at refuserecords.bandcamp.com/album/czart-prl-u-lp.

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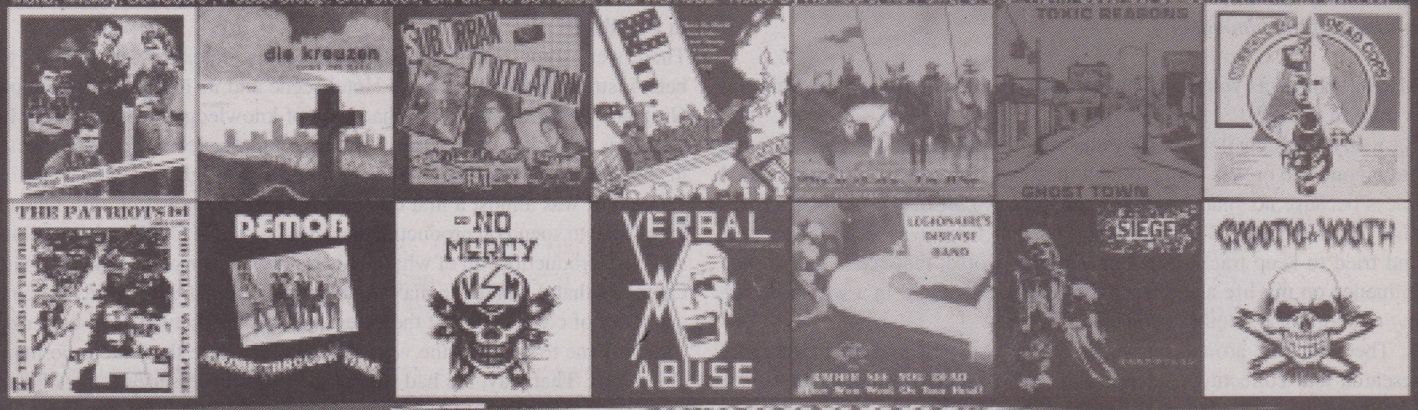

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DISTORTED:

REFLECTIONS ON EARLY SYDNEY PUNK

above photo: Urban Guerillas, by Darian Turner
opposite page, top right: The Grand Hotel, Sydney
opposite page, bottom: Last Words, by Darian Turner

Distorted: Reflections on Early Sydney Punk *is a documentary film that focuses on the scene that grew around Sydney, Australia's Grand Hotel, a venue started by some younger punks after the closure of Radio Birdman's legendary Funhouse in 1977. Yes, by the end of that year Oz already had a second wave of punks, and this film is about those folks' experience building a scene of their own. If you feel like the retrospective punk documentary as a genre has become stale and repetitive, I direct your attention to* **Distorted** *by first-time documentarian Des Devlin. It's a refreshingly honest, positive, fair-handed and down-to-earth film—no Rollins, no famous bands, no one saying how cool it was before hardcore ruined punk, etc. And for record geeks and fans of early Oz punk there are definitely some nerd moments, like the story of the misspelling of "you're" on the Rocks' "You'r So Boring" and the deadly live footage of the Last Words.* **MRR** *sat down to discuss the filmmaking process with director Des Devlin. Introduction and interview by Paul Curran. Photos courtesy of the filmmaker.*

MRR: What was your motivation to make this film, and how long did it take to finish?

Basically, I thought it was a story that ought to be told, or at least attempted, but no one had or was about to. Not much was known about that scene—I guess because no "name bands" came out it. Part of the motivation was also the material. I'd known for years that there was material around, and tried to keep track of it. For better or worse, that scene had a huge influence on my life and I wanted to explore that and in a way compare my memory of it to other peoples'.

The film took around ten years to make, if you include preliminary research and collecting materials. In 2003 I started a degree in ethics. My thesis was an attempt to see how punk ethics sat with traditional ethical theory. For example, straightedge might be seen as falling within a broader historical ethic of abstinence found in the temperance movement, or renunciation found in asceticism. During that time I slowly started to collect and digitize materials. I then took the idea of a film to another university as a proposal for a doctoral thesis. I met with Hart Cohen at the School of Humanities and Communication Arts at the University of Western Sydney and he agreed to supervise the project. That was when I knew the film would actually get done. (The film is the visual part of the thesis, which also includes a written dissertation.) So, in the same way I had looked at punk within ethical theory, with the film I was looking at punk subculture through a kind of prism of visual anthropology—though you wouldn't necessarily see that by watching the film because it was mostly about research methods and process, and the way the film was put together.

MRR: Was it hard to find everyone you wanted to interview? Were there some people you couldn't find or people that didn't want to be in the film?

There were some people I thought I needed to interview because they'd been instrumental in the Grand Hotel scene and its history. For example, Greg and Pete from the Scabs had a lot of knowledge on establishing the Grand as a punk venue. Mostly though, interviewees were not selected in the usual way that documentary filmmakers might go about selecting "talent." It was almost a first come, first served approach. I didn't have a lot of time to spend on production because I also had to think about editing and post-production, all of which I did on my own on a Hackintosh I built. On top of that, I wanted to make sure people felt that their words were not taken out of context or that they were not misrepresented. So I organized for everyone to preview the work and to make sure there were no major objections. That way, if I had to, I could make necessary changes before showing it in public. I think this is just basic respect for the people you're working with, especially when you haven't seen most of them in 30 years and you're asking them to trust you with their stories. The duty of care you

have to people becomes very tangible, and you don't want to piss people off or cause them grief. Not because they're going to find you and kick your teeth in, but it's just a basic respect thing. Amongst all that I had to write my dissertation, which I ended up completely rewriting after the film was completed.

There were a few people I knew, or knew of, who I wasn't able to find. It was mostly a case of starting from scratch. I had no idea where I'd find people or what country they'd be living in, or even if they were still alive. I was told Bob Short had died in London sometime in the 1980s, so it was great to find him alive and well and living in Sydney. There were a couple of people who agreed to an interview and then backed out, which I think is fair enough. The history of documentary filmmaking is rife with exploitation for the sake of "getting the story." Or, in the case of research more broadly, manufacturing the findings by being selective with your data.

MRR: One very noticeable thing is that there is no mention of the most famous early Australian punk bands: the Saints and Radio Birdman. Even X is only briefly represented in the film. Was this on purpose, or did these bands have relatively little influence on the Sydney scene?

I wanted to focus fairly strictly on the Grand Hotel scene. The Saints were from Brisbane, though they did move to Sydney for a while before heading off to the UK. As for Radio Birdman, the Grand as a venue was pretty much modeled on the self-managed aspect of their venue, the Funhouse. But at the Grand there was a sense of having moved on from them. It was a much younger crew, a lot of school-age kids. John Healy was thirteen years old when he was playing in his first band, Schizophrenia. Same with Darian Turner when she started photographing the scene. Also the Grand scene was made up of kids from everywhere—the country, the outer suburbs, as well as the city. By contrast, the Birdman scene came across, at least to young ratbags like myself, as sophisticated and kind of impenetrable.

The other thing to say about Birdman is that so much of what is written about them is caught up in how early they were. There's that whole index that people fixate on—who came first, who was before whom and so on—and to me that is really boring. Even though *Distorted* for the most part moves along chronologically, I hope it conveys the idea that, for many people, punk is a personal experience that doesn't have to be tied down to a certain period.

X was a different matter. They didn't regularly play the Grand but they were loved by everyone. To this day they are my favorite live rock'n'roll band of all time. But the reason they don't feature more in *Distorted* is because during filming I met someone who said they were making a film on X. So I thought they were going to be well documented at some point. And ultimately the film isn't about "punk rock" but punk subculture and memory.

MRR: What are the Central Station area and Darling Harbor (which I gathered was very nearby) like today? Is the Grand Hotel still there?

The Grand Hotel building was demolished in the mid 1980s to make way for a multi-million-dollar hotel complex. To my mind, that is a real shame because the Grand was established in the mid 19th century and had an incredible history. One of its owners had been the subject of Sydney's biggest fraud case in the late 1800s. When he died he left his fortune to his two (for want of a better word) illegitimate children and their mothers. His lawyer and a few other establishment people thought they were too lowly and undeserving of such a massive sum of money and so forged his will to their financial benefit. But they were busted and a couple of them sent to prison. It was a huge scandal. The area around the site is also historically fascinating if you're into that sort of thing. I guess for us Australians we are always looking for ways to unravel the lies perpetrated from the time of colonization, because our real history has been actively and systematically perverted for over 200 years. Sydney is a city hell bent on demolition of the past in all its aspects.

MRR: You gathered an impressive amount of great photos and film footage. Was it part of your original plan to focus on the scene photographers and filmmakers, or did you realize while making the documentary that these folks deserved some special attention?

I was incredibly fortunate that people like Astrid Spielman and Toby Zoates were generous with their material and let me digitize it. The chapter "Imagemakers" was a bit of an homage to the

people who had the presence of mind back then to record what was going on around them. A lot of material was gone or badly degraded but a lot of it was fairly intact too, which I think is kind of miraculous considering people had lugged it round with them for 30 years or more.

MRR: There are some punks in the film who were (and still are) very politically minded and some that think politics has no part in punk, but as a viewer I came out feeling like they all had valid viewpoints. Was this clever editing or just the way it worked out naturally?

One participant, Rob Crasti, remarked that Sydney punk politics ran the whole gamut, and that was pretty much supported in the interviews. But I thought, rather than have someone just say that, it would be better to show it through the diversity of positions. I suppose it is further testament to the idea that punk is at the same time both instantly recognizable and impossible to define. But yes, it was important to present a spectrum of viewpoints and let viewers decide where to take that.

MRR: There's no mention of fanzines at all. Wasn't anybody doing them at the time?

Sydney had a small number of really vibrant zines. I contacted the publisher of what was probably the best known one at the time, but he declined to be interviewed. You could say it was a bit of an oversight but at the same time I didn't have any interviewees to work with, and the film was interview-based. In hindsight I guess a kind of montage segment of zine graphics might have been possible but then, every single second of the film had to be cleared for use—not only the video interviews but also all of the archival materials, so in the end it came down to logistics.

MRR: What part did you have in the early Sydney scene? Did you have a band, zine, or anything like that?

I was part of the Grand scene. I'm there in the crowd in some of the footage and images, but no, I wasn't doing a zine and didn't really play in a band until 1979. My brother Andy was a founding member of the Last Words. We were living at my parents' house 50 kilometers outside of Sydney when punk came along. So I have him to blame, and probably another brother, Terry, who had an incredible bootleg and import record collection. There was a music mag in Australia called *RAM* and I remember seeing a full-page ad for the Ramones in it and thinking, "What's this Ram Ones? Did the magazine put together a band?" Later I would sit in a wardrobe with my '70s headphones and listen to that album and it was a deeply powerful and ecstatic experience for me at the time, hugely liberating. Blondie toured in '77 and Andy took me along to that and a few other things. Then he moved out and it wasn't until I left school and moved into the city that I got to go to punk gigs and meet punks my own age. I also remember Andy asking me if I thought the Stranglers were punk or hippie because, well, there was a punk on bass but there was also a guy who looked like Denis Hopper from *Easy Rider* and he played keyboards.

MRR: Why did you decide to give *Distorted* away for free online rather than charge money for it?

I didn't want money to get in the way of the story. I wanted it to be as free as possible from commerce. I was lucky in that I was able to do it out of a university. I approached it as research, not as filmmaking in the usual sense where you have a crew and a budget and you have to think about funding and distribution deals etc. I didn't have time for any of that. It also fits with the period, and bands like the Thought Criminals making their music from then free for download. They had a great song called "I Won't Pay (For Punk Records)," which is pretty much the same sentiment as Crass's line about the Clash—"not for revolution, just for cash," which I don't think is 100% accurate but it's definitely valid. I'm aware of the arguments about artists' rights to their intellectual copyright, but I thought in this case it would be better to just give it away.

> ... IT IS FURTHER TESTAMENT TO THE IDEA THAT PUNK IS AT THE SAME TIME BOTH INSTANTLY RECOGNIZABLE AND IMPOSSIBLE TO DEFINE.

photo: Urban Guerillas, by Arthur Georgeson

MRR: Did the film have an opening event or any big screenings? Festivals?

Two of the participants, John Clements and Bob Short, helped me organize a premiere screening. I had approached them with the idea of doing readings, because they are both writers. But they convinced me that the screening should be a full-scale gig. And they were right, it was standing room only. A whole load of Grand Hotel bands got together and played. The Urban Guerillas played for the first time in 30 years. The film was then shown at a few small festivals, including the Too Drunk To Watch Punkfilmfest in Berlin, which is organized by a couple of really great people, Corny Schulz and Christiane Meißner. It runs over four days in May and I would recommend anyone with a punk film to show to track them down.

You can watch Distorted: Reflections on Early Sydney Punk *for free at: distorteddocumentary.weebly.com*

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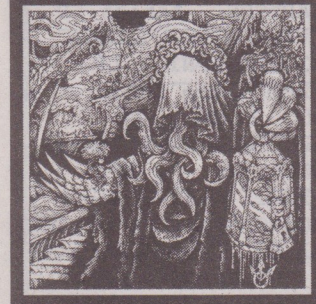

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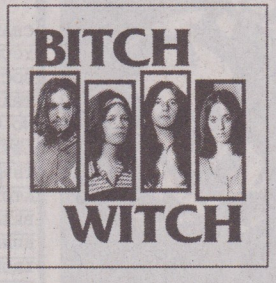

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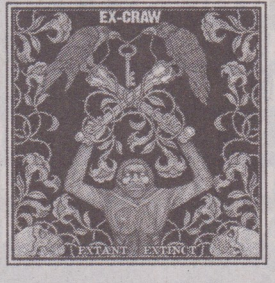

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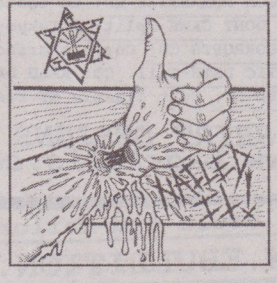

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STILL SCREAMING FROM THE GUTTER

An Interview with

If punk mythology truly existed, the tale of *Raw Power*

might unfurl as, "...then the gods of punk-metal rose from Italy to conquer the whole world!" Held together thick as thieves for years by brothers—throat-scorched Mauro and walloping guitarist Giuseppe Codeluppi (the latter died in 2002)—the band kick-started in Poviglio in the early 1980s. A few years later they toured like a corkscrew tornado across America, recording in Indiana in 1984 with the singer of Zero Boys and stirring fans far and wide. They practically invented the crossover genre alongside Corrosion of Conformity and D.R.I.. Hinting at their impending stature, they appeared with juggernauts GBH and Dickies on the documentary Punks and Poseurs, *aired in 1985 on MTV. In the hands of such Mediterranean sonic sculptors, their adamant politics—raging at state oppression, police, and bosses—becomes fused with high voltage rock'n'roll played dizzyingly fast, though without sacrificing plentiful chops. Such gusto and rage embodied a sense of classic counterculture. Their newest testament to greatness,* Tired and Furious, *is hands-down their most sinewy since gold standard* Screams From the Gutter / After Your Brain *made the mold that 100,000 bands have followed. Mauro Codeluppi spoke with David Ensminger for* MRR. *Introduction and photos provided by Ensminger.*

MRR: You call Raw Power an anti-politics band, why?

When we first started playing in the early 1980s, it was a time when many bands were into politics, and we just decided we didn't want to be the kind of band that said, "This is the way I think, and this is the way you should think because it's my way of thinking and everything else is wrong" in the lyrics. We just didn't want to do it, but there were many bands that did, and did it well. So, we thought, why do we need to do it too? At the end of the day, what we wanted to do more than anything else was to play. That was our main aim. Yes, maybe the lyrics talked about the problems that were happening, but they did not take sides. Of course, we all have sides, and we'd be on the left side. That might be something you could read into the lyrics, but we never said anything outright.

MRR: But you did write "State Oppression," "Police, Police," and "Our Oppression." What felt so oppressive?

First of all, where basically three of us lived was a very small village. Poviglio, a village of Reggio, was only like 6,000 people back when I was born in the 1960s, and it is the same now. So, the lyrics were more about what was happening to us, like "Police, Police," which was about what was happening where we lived. But then the more you travel the more you see it was really the same everywhere: people don't like the police in their place just like I don't like the police in my village. People are the same. "State Oppression" was about what was happening in Italy at the moment. It wasn't a specific thing; it was about what was generally happening at the time. It could be exactly the same now. If I were to write the same song, I would write the same lyrics because the same shit is happening now that happened fifty years ago.

MRR: Your region has been the site of many invasions—Hungarians, Austrians, Napoleon, plus during the last century it was a center of socialism. Were you aware of your own history, and was it important to you?

Where we are from, well, they like to think they still are communists, but they are not. If we split a map into different colors, the region would all be red because it was the center of communism. It has always been and definitely was when we started. Now, it's not the same. There is a bit of confusion, and people don't know what they are anymore. Back then people were communists. We are aware of the past. Every region in Italy is different. Italy is basically divided into the north and the south. Things happened in the north that didn't happen in the south. We have a very different history, even within Italy. Then you have the islands, which are different too, Sardinia and Sicily. They are almost a world of their own. But we know what happened to us, with all the invasions and everything, but basically what counts for us is the people. The people who we live around here are the type of people who stuck together and tried, however they could, to fight against those who came in. One day there were the Austrians; the next day there were Germans. We've always had people come there. The partisan movement was quite active. It was born where we are from.

MRR: People crowded around and applauded when Mussolini fell.

Where we are, there is the Alcide Cervi Institute, Reggio Emilia/Cervi Museum, a museum of the Cervi Brothers, seven very famous anti-fascists in Italy, who were killed by the Nazis. The region where we are from is very strong like that. They fought against Mussolini, but then again, there were a lot of people who followed him on the outside because back then if you were not on his side they killed you. So, everything you did, you had to do in hiding. You don't even believe it until you speak to the old people or read the books. Some people pretended to be on the fascist side, like, "I have a family, and this is what I have to do in order to survive. I go around dressed in black with my stupid hat on in order to get to the next day."

MRR: Was it also the region that supported the Brigade Rosse/Red Brigade, the radical leftists?

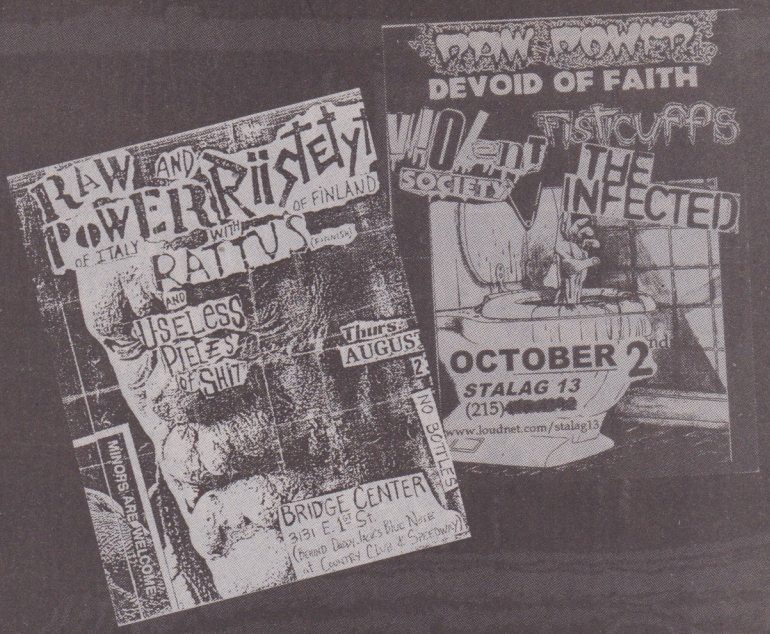
Well, the Red Brigade was good when they started, but they went over the top when they started mass killings.

MRR: Terrorism?

Yeah, they lost the sympathy of the normal people. If you were like one of them or the circle around them, maybe you agreed with everything they did. At a certain point when they started, people really liked them because they were against the government. At the time it was really bad, but in the end they made mistakes.

MRR: What did you think of Joe Strummer wearing his Brigade Rosse T-shirt? Was that an honest way to support radicalism or an example of pop star ridiculousness?

I don't know. If you look at the Clash and you look at him, maybe it wasn't about agreeing with the Red Brigade. I am not even sure he knew about the Red Brigade. It might have been that he fancied the T-shirt and thought the name was cool. But I'd like to think he knew what it was and he wore it because he shared their ideas, or at least some of the ideas of the Red Brigade.



MRR: When you came to America and cut the record in Indianapolis with the singer of Zero Boys, how aware were you of their music and early American hardcore?

That's the reason we came here in the first place. That's probably the reason why we are still playing now. Most of our music was influenced by hardcore from the West Coast, a little from the East Coast, but mostly West. 90% of our influences were American bands except for Discharge, Exploited, and GBH. But that's it. The rest of everything else we were listening to was coming from here. So when we came here, we knew what to expect because we had heard tapes…

MRR: Bootlegs?

What would happen is somebody would get ahold of a record and they would record like 1,000 of them and get them all over the place. My brother was the one that started us, basically, with Maurizio the bassist. But he was the one who got most of the music, apart from Davide, who was into heavy metal. He had access to his own stuff. So, we exchanged tapes and records, and once someone had one copy, there were copies everywhere. We wanted to come here and listen to it. We had heard it on tape, but we wanted to come here and hear the Americans playing it.

MRR: The 1985 versions sound fuller and faster. Was that the result of being in the studio, or being on the road and honing the songs?

The first time, with the demo we made, where some of the songs were the same songs we re-recorded here, we recorded in a cow shed basically with a home mixer. It was real shit, so they would have to sound better in any decent studio. In Italy we maybe played once a month, if we were lucky. So you practiced, which is not the same as playing in front of people. But sometimes we would go for months without a gig, but once you are [on tour in America], you play every day. It gets better and better.

MRR: The biggest show, I think, was in Los Angeles opening for the Dead Kennedys.

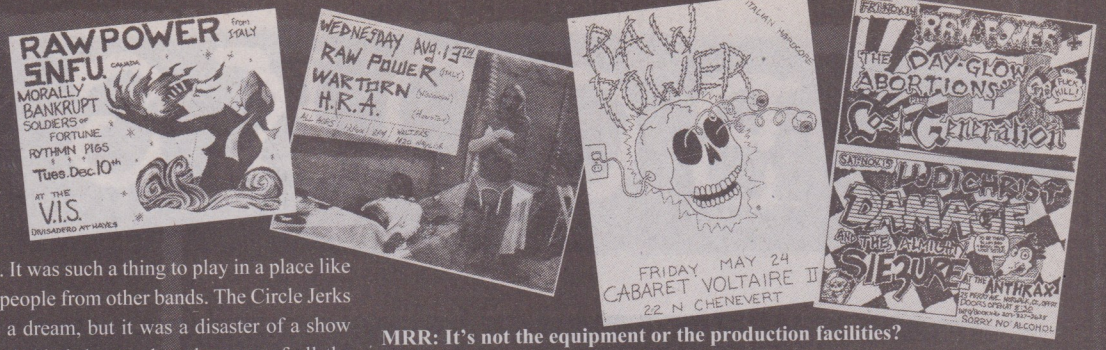
Yeah, an international show with Solucion Mortal.

MRR: Did the large scene surprise you?

For us, it was like a baby running through a toyshop. Sometimes when you say that to kids now, they don't understand it because they have satellite channels and internet, so by the time they see something they know all about it because they've seen everything you can see about it. When we came here, we hadn't seen anything, except for *Kojak* or some shit, and we saw New York and the buildings. It was so much more visual, it was different. When we arrived in New York City and saw the Empire State Building for real, it was soooo big. Everything else was big, the other buildings and even cars, the food, the roads; everything was bigger.

MRR: I heard a couple guys in the band complained about the way we eat.

Yeah, but once you are here, you just eat everything. Like I said, everything was bigger. It's like the American thing. So, when we got to the LA show, we just could not believe it. When they told us, you guys will play there, we just went "Oh shit."



MRR: Were you totally nerve-wracked?
By then, no. It was like you didn't have time. It was such a thing to play in a place like that. Before going on stage, we met all these people from other bands. The Circle Jerks and all these other bands were there. It was a dream, but it was a disaster of a show because we hardly played. We had to hide behind the speakers because of all the people coming on stage. It was so fucked.

MRR: What did you think of the politics of the Dead Kennedys and MDC?
What I think is everyone is entitled to their own ideas. It's up to you whether or not you want to listen or care. When you are a band, you have to decide whether you want to play with them or not. Of course, you have to read through their lyrics a bit. You don't want to end up playing with a band that is a Nazi skin band, so you have to have an idea of what their ideas are. So, with all the bands we played with, in general, in theory, we agree with them. I wouldn't write anything down like they have because I can't. I'm no good at it. But I can agree and share their ideas, but I try and have them do it.

MRR: Along with B.G.K., you were the first non-English hardcore band to tour the US. Did people treat you like an ambassador for Europe?
Back then, the first two or three years, people treated us…well now, it would be considered being treated as rock stars. I mean cheap ones. It was always on the cheap, but still, out of 100 shows, 98 times we slept at somebody's house, and they would be excited to have us at the house. It got to the point where different people would ask us to stay over. So, we could ask them, "Do you have a pool?" or "Will you cook barbeque tomorrow?" That's how good it was. People would call home and ask mom and dad, "Can I bring these people home?" And they would take us around to do the shopping and show us around. Being from Italy, we didn't think it would be like that, because for an American band coming to Italy, they would just go around on their own and nobody would give a fuck about them. Here, it was really like people fighting to have us. The first weeks, people would come up and touch us and ask, "Are you really Italian?" "Yeah, I am from Italy." There are more Italians here than in Italy! But it's not the same thing.

MRR: Chris from BCT Tapes spoke a little Spanish, so he could communicate a bit with those of you who didn't speak English.
He's from San Diego, but he's Mexican.

MRR: Two of you, after a show in Mexico, were stuck behind the border. Did that terrify you a bit?
We couldn't play because one passport had expired and one left his passport on the American side of the border. When we went into Mexico they didn't care, and the Americans didn't care either, like "Get out of here." But when they tried to come back, the officials were like, "No, you can't come back." They were stuck for a few days in Mexico. But in the end, after two days, they got their passports. It wasn't exactly a brilliant place to be, and we didn't know exactly what was happening to them, but we knew Solucion Mortal, who had played with us in LA and lived in Tijuana, so we knew they were being taken care of. We were worried, but not that worried.

MRR: You lived in England—going to school?
I went to study. I went to college to learn English. I went there when I was seventeen. The official reason, for my family, was I went there to learn English, but the unofficial reason was I went there to see concerts because at that time in Italy no bands were coming in. But in England, all the punk bands were happening in 1977 and 1978, so that was the main reason. I lived in London for eight years.

MRR: Why do you often use American producers, including the new album?
For this kind of music, you need an American. Of all our records, you can hear which ones were made in Italy. They sound bad. When you hear them in the studio, you think, this sounds good, but once it's on CD, it just sounds bad. Except in America, that doesn't happen; they have the ears for this kind of music.

MRR: It's not the equipment or the production facilities?
No, no, the studios in Italy were like any studios here, but the engineer usually deals with other types of music, like folk, so it just sounds bad. You can have all the equipment you want, it just doesn't sound the same. I think the last record we just made is the best record, we have ever, ever made. It was recorded so much better. *Resuscitate*, which we recorded in Seattle—the engineer, brilliant; the studio, brilliant—does not sound as good. Some of it was our fault. Maybe we weren't as prepared as this last one. Also, the engineer, although he was very good, maybe he wasn't used to hardcore the way we do it. But with this last one, I've never seen anybody working so hard, non-stop, until the morning. We were the ones to tell him to stop working! He was a machine, and I liked him.

MRR: The bass is very out-front, pops out much more than other records. Was that on purpose?
One reason is the bass player helped mix it with him. On some of the records, you couldn't hear it, but it's good to hear the bass, it has a nice punch.

MRR: When you sit down to write a song, is it the same as when you did in 1983?
Before, it was always my brother who made the rough song. He used to come in with this idea and show us a couple of chords, and then the whole band would join him. After my brother died, in fact, I told the others…Well, first off, it broke up the band, but then after a few months I was like, maybe not. I told them we are not going to record anything anymore. The main reason was his death, which was bad because the band was my brother's anyway, so I didn't think it was right, but the other half was that I didn't think the other musicians in the band could do the same stuff. It has to be Raw Power, not something different. For me, it was fine to keep playing the same old songs, but if you are a musician, you want to do new stuff. They kept insisting and going on and on about this. So, I was like, okay, come up with something, and if I think it's good, we can do it, that's just it. Our guitarist started with the riffs and everything, and that's how we started, and in the end we were like, yeah, not bad, no worse than the others!

MRR: Your songs remain universal because they speak to a general distrust and bitterness towards authority, bosses, and police, which links well to the Occupy Movement and WTO protests.
Some of them are specific to our place and time, so if you don't live there you don't know about it, unless maybe you read it in the paper. But in general, it was about things pissing us off at the time. I figured, I'll just write about it. But it's like flipping through the channels now and seeing it's just as bad everywhere. There is no place that is really good.

MRR: Do you believe in a united Europe, or nationalism instead?
Before, when the Euro came out, everybody thought it was a good idea. But at the end of the day, we were fucked up big time. The cost of everything suddenly just doubled in price, but if we hadn't gone with the Euro, we'd probably be worse off. The fact is the single currency makes it easy because you go everywhere and you have the same money and coin, but a single Europe? I think that's difficult because people are so different. People may not hate each other, but they don't like each other. The English and French dislike each other. The Italians dislike everybody, and everybody hates Italians anyway, so I don't think it will ever happen. It's not like here in America, where every state is like a country, but at the end of the day you all speak the same language and you are an American. In Europe, everybody speaks their own language, so there will never be a United States of Europe. I don't think so, ever. People are too different.

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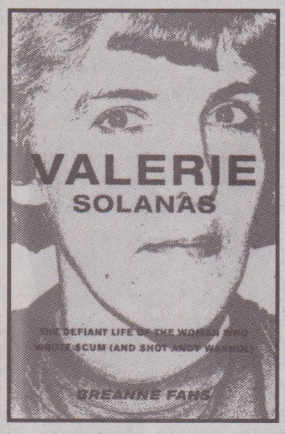
BOOKS



Valerie Solanas: The Defiant Life of the Woman Who Wrote SCUM (and Shot Andy Warhol)
Breanne Fahs
382 pages • $22.95
The Feminist Press
feministpress.org

Valerie Solanas is a strange cultural icon. She is perhaps most often used as a derogatory warning for young women: "the wrong kind of feminist." In an age of combating #womenagainstfeminism with cupcakey bullshit and Kathleen Hanna documentaries, this lack of historical accuracy and nuance is detrimental. We require Valerie to be represented as what she truly was: a fiercely intellectual militant feminist who died poor and alone because this world kills people like that.

Personally, Valerie is of interest to me in charting these people, the controversial, difficult women that are forgotten and discarded. Even among them Valerie is not alone is her abandonment. The great failures are Valerie Solanas, Lee Lozano, and Shulamith Firestone. All attempted to straddle art and politics. All chose madness and obscurity in lieu of becoming washed out in the limelight. Nuts to the Steinems!

In April I visited New York City and was lucky enough to attend a release event at NYU for this book. An intimidating panel included Avital Ronell, Lisa Duggan, Karen Finley, and the author Breanne Fahs. As the panel went on, I slowly realized what was happening. I was in a room full of (mostly) beautiful, smart women repeating the word "shit" over and over. I like to think this was the utopia Valerie imagined so long ago.

I understand that in even articulating that idea I'm doing exactly what everyone has ever done to Valerie's work. I project my own desires into the intricate complications of her life, art, and work. We exist in this place where refining women (and other complicated people) into flattened figures is the norm. Is it even possible to tell a story of history in a way that isn't problematic? It's so riddled with the afflictions of opinion and memory failure.

Breanne is a delicate biographer. She fills in nuance without betraying the subject. She's compassionate and holistic. What is produced feels dense. While it's not a totally critical history it is one that demands an active participant. The story of Valerie's years in New York's Lower East Side, culminating in her infamous act, are bookended by the brutal years that created and destroyed the human being. It's perhaps not fair to conceptualize a human life as a flickering light with a crescendo.

When one regards the tragedy of Valerie's life it's too easy to conjure pity and rely on that as some accurate representation of her total legacy. The truth is Valerie *saved* us. Solanas undeniably produced a cultural crack-up. The burgeoning feminist consciousness raising movement would have been nothing without her. While so much organization was vulcanized at the time of her arrest, theory too owes her a great debt. Shulamith Firestone's conceptualized "Smile Strike," from the far more validated *The Dialectic of Sex* was preceded by Solanas' call for the death of *niceness*. Modern theoretical feminism and queer theory still look towards *SCUM* for guidance. Kathi Weeks' "non-work" recalls Valerie's "un-working." Sara Ahmed's Feminist Killjoy and Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman's beckoning towards an academically sanctioned queer nihilism all have foundations in *SCUM*.

There has been a tendency to regard Valerie as an accident. She is often removed or distanced from revisionist feminist history. While it's true that she never did fit in with the publicized movement, she does not deserve to be forgotten. Valerie was as much of a disruption to the slide into co-opting radical feminism towards liberal reformism or as it's been suggested—just a disruption in general. Her personal effect on the lives of some of the most cherished minds of this movement is not to be undermined. The correspondence with and testimony of Ti-Grace Atkinson, Roseanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Florence Kennedy, Shulamith Firestone and Robin Morgan are all included, finally cementing Valerie in her place among them.

A legacy like this deserves a considerate articulation. Fahs took ten years to write the book Valerie swore she'd write herself. This kind of care for Solanas' life is uncommonly kind when you consider the treatment Valerie's work received the second anyone else got their hands on it. All of it has been stolen, lost, edited, misspelled, withheld, hidden, and destroyed.

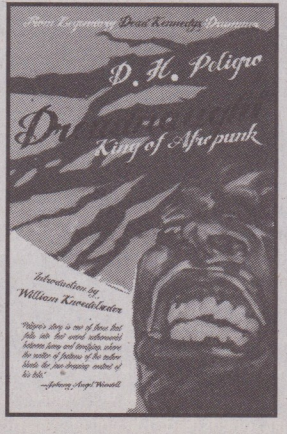
Even now, the bulk of Valerie's surviving work (*SCUM Manifesto*) is printed and distributed largely by the anarchist-publishing house AK Press. Every few years another edition comes out with another forward written by a different person. The most recent edition touts notorious Marilyn Manson fan Michelle Tea's take on the manifesto. Ms. Tea, once a young radical dyke poet, is now the editor of a popular hipster motherhood blog. While the lesbian mother could be one interpretation of Valerie's demand for "complete automation" it still feels something like failure. *And where does the money go?*

Valerie Solanas is an attempt to map the great sources of the paranoia that were Valerie's downfall. Like any young woman, her sexuality and psychic body were mangled early on. Part of the map of Valerie's life is strongly situated in the way she defined and declared her vision. Breanne uses Valerie's own words whenever possible. It's rather exciting for any Solanas fans out there to get to eek whatever they can out of the quotes from *Up Your Ass*, various interviews, college newspaper articles, and correspondence that Breanne had access to.

These kinds of considerations are partly due to Fahs' background in Feminist Studies and Psychology, a very important distinction in the overall tone of the book. Fahs is careful to include the reputation and conditions of not only the institutions that Valerie landed in after shooting Andy Warhol, but critically traces her movements through schools, the hospitals where she gave birth to at least two children, residential hotels, jail cells, collective meetings, diners and beds. You see this complicated figure moving about truly alive and conscious, wading through the same shit as all of us.

I finished the book on the train headed to work. I got off two stops early and rode my bike to the place Valerie died. Alone in a hotel room (and never wanted once) for at least five days. The front of the Bristol Hotel is collaged with handwritten notes regarding hotel policies and notes to UPS drivers. A historical site plaque bulges from the wall. It neglects to mention the two most famous residents, Valerie and "The Night Stalker," Richard Ramirez, notorious serial killer/rapist and Satanist.

—E. Connor



Dreadnaught: King of Afropunk
D. H. Peligro
280 pages • $18.00
Rare Bird Books
rarebirdbooks.com

These 280 pages chart the colourful, troubled and, at times, tragic episodes within the life of the highly energetic D.H. Peligro. There is a lot going on in these chapters: strong themes regarding casual and overt racism, personal feelings of inadequacy, difficult relationships, and, of course, lots of anecdotal stories from his experiences surrounding bands such as SSI, Dead Kennedys, Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Peligro. The accounts of a tough upbringing in a St. Louis

ghetto and his musical adventures are however very much the backdrop to the real thrust of the story, which is an intensely detailed account of his constant struggle with drug and alcohol abuse.

As a result of the difficult subject matter and as a by-product of what must be hazy and cobbled together recollections, his many chapters seem to meander and blend into one another. This adds a pretty unusual feel to the book, which, although it aims to provide a fast-moving chronology, at times almost defies time and space. It is easy to get a bit disorientated within these pages, as his fragmentary accounts become almost dreamlike sequences where people and relationships enter and exit between his many relapses. The tenor of this book, rather like what I believe the man himself to be, is pretty blunt, direct, and defiant. It's an extremely honest, no holds barred account and the very matter-of-fact way he describes the many harrowing incidents almost anaesthetises the reader—so much so that after a few chapters the disturbing reality of this battle against addiction becomes a continual process of relapse, rehab, relapse, rehab.

A brief summary of what you will encounter in these pages might read as follows: an addiction to any and all drugs; weed, beer, cocaine, any alcohol, resin, methadone, Klonopin, Valium, speedballs, crack, and most of all, the leading actress in the story, "Lady Her-ron" (aka heroin). Life in an environment where people constantly overdose, friends get murdered over drug deals gone wrong, car chases, car crashes, detox, jail, motorbike accidents, police raids, more detox, convenience store robberies, police helicopters, wasted royalty checks, more detox, turning people onto dope, conning money, cotton-fever, getting busted, more detox, insomnia, chronic back pain, more detox, kidney failure, draining liters of pus from abscesses…even chunks of rotting flesh falling off his body during a band practice—all in all, a pretty visceral account which certainly qualifies for his moniker of "fuck-zone of altered reality."

I did enjoy the book and testimony to this was how quickly I finished it. The fragmented nature of his story sort of conveys a lot of its chaos and recurring demons. Jumping back and forth between his ever-changing relationships with his family members, his many girlfriends, groupies, and casual sexual encounters, fellow musicians, and junkies certainly keeps the reader on her toes.

Throughout its many small chapters, each of which focus on one piece of the jigsaw puzzle, he often returns to the subject of racism, something which has plagued him throughout his life and which he has been attuned to from an early age. From being busted whilst on tour with the Dead Kennedys by Australian cops who thought he was an Aborigine drinking a beer in public, to his feelings of inferiority or being out of place when playing in a world primarily populated by white musicians, you get a real sense of D.H.'s unease and anger. He also recounts how these many situations have contributed to and reinforced a lack of self-confidence and how he spent time with Biafra, who would offer him support on these issues and encourage him to speak out more and not be afraid to express himself in public.

These chapters also contain a lot of reflections about the legacy of an abusive childhood and his resentment about the inequalities and unfairness of society in general. This seeps through when he mentions how in his early years he used to play music with his Uncle Sam, who played with legendary bluesman Robert Nighthawk and was visited from time to time by a then-emerging generation of musicians such as Jimmy Page, Eric Clapton, and Mick Jagger. Peligro points out how his Uncle Sam got some great recognition but never the financial rewards or the mansion on Beverley Hills like these guys did.

His Uncle Sam was influential in Peligro's decision to learn drums and guitar and D. H. gives an interesting account of his early attractions to Hendrix and how he played in progressive rock and metal bands before he gravitated to the San Francisco punk scene.

I must admit I was initially attracted to the book owing to Peligro's involvement with the Dead Kennedys, however, aside from personal reflections about his bandmates, I didn't really learn anything particularly new in this area. For Peligro, Ray was the organizer, the bean counter, the moneyman, and very much a ladies man, with so many girlfriends that he should have formed a band named the Ex-Rays. Rather than taking this route of "taking drugs or fucking lots of girls," Biafra was, on the other hand, very much the ideas man. Someone far more in tune with the ideas and politics of the moment and who would sit up all night talking to crowds of people or doing interviews—something which irked his roommate Peligro. That said, Peligro absorbed and championed the politicized message enjoying how Biafra's lyrics and theatrical delivery would allow the band to "shower the audience with political, punk-rock awareness."

Klaus on the other hand was the little old absent-minded-professor who always looked out for Peligro's welfare, providing his accommodation when he moved to San Francisco and resisting Ray's insistence that as a new member he should be paid less than the other band members, arguing that "D.H. works just as hard as anybody else." From this book and the recently released, and quite excellent *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* by Alex Ogg, you get a real feeling that the Dead Kennedys was a really unique blend of fascinating individuals, all of whom contributed in their own way to making the band such a quirky, intelligent, and entertaining phenomenon.

The final chapter relates the wider family story via his sister and mother, the real victims of all this excess, and brings things to a surprising conclusion. The story departs with D.H.'s spiritual re-awakening and how he has now found an alternative god of a strict health regime. Someone with little truck for religion, official belief-systems, and who lambasts religious-types in early chapters, now prays to his own composition of Zen, Buddha and God. You can't help but wonder how he is doing these days and the real and endearing twist would be that he hasn't lapsed back into "using."

—Andy Higgins

Dead Kennedys: Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables, The Early Years
Alex Ogg
204 pages • $17.95
PM Press
pmpress.org

To my knowledge there has not yet been an in-depth comprehensive biography of the Dead Kennedys. This book, *Dead Kennedys: Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables, The Early Years,* is not that book. But it could serve as the first few chapters of said book as it is a fairly comprehensive look into the Dead Kennedys, from the beginning up to their first album, *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables*. The seed of this book was the author being asked to compile sleeve notes for the 25th anniversary reissue of *Fresh Fruit,* but due to now typical band wrangling, the project was scrapped.

I think it's safe to say the Dead Kennedys and *Fresh Fruit*'s place in punk history are pretty well established, being one of the most important and popular punk bands and albums of all time. They had a truly unique sound, had something to say, and an image and presence that is nearly unequaled. And, what with a new documentary film or in-depth biography about some punk band or local scene coming out seemingly every month, it's a shame that the Dead Kennedys apparently will not get a similar treatment. Or, thanks to the band members' (well, mostly Jello Biafra's and East Bay Ray's) inability to agree on pretty much anything involving the band's history, will not allow it to happen.

Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables, The Early Years follows a pretty standard rock biography format, describing the early San Francisco punk scene, detailing each band members' early life, their path to the Bay Area and punk rock, and the formation of the band and the early shows. And of course, Jello's run for mayor of San Francisco and the infamous BAMMIE awards show are covered. There's also quite a bit of information on the recording sessions, the early singles ("California Über Alles," "Holiday in Cambodia" and "Kill the Poor") and their dealings with Cherry Red Records, some of the most interesting parts of the book. Hearing how East Bay Ray got that guitar sound, how the songs were developed, and how a San Francisco punk band ended up on an upstart independent UK label were details I was not familiar with. The book ends with a chapter about a 1980 UK tour that feels a little filler to me.

Alex Ogg interviewed all the original members, including the drummer Ted. As to be expected these days, there are lots of bitter feelings and disagreements, especially between Jello Biafra and East Bay Ray, mostly over songwriting and production credit—but really, just about everything. Alex Ogg does a good job of finding a good balance of letting both parties tell their side of the story, while keeping the narrative moving and not getting too bogged down in a he said/he said argument.

Ultimately, this is a pretty quick read, though the book is filled out with Winston Smith artwork (plus a short biography of Smith), artwork from the *Fresh Fruit* insert poster, flyers, cover art, and photos by Ruby Ray. Now we just have to wait for the rest of the story to be told.

—Mark Dober

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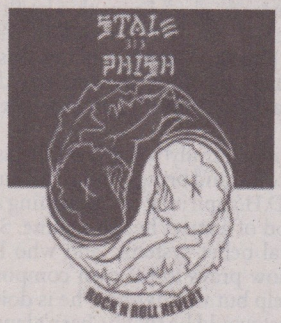

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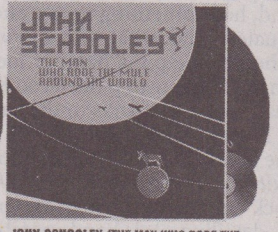

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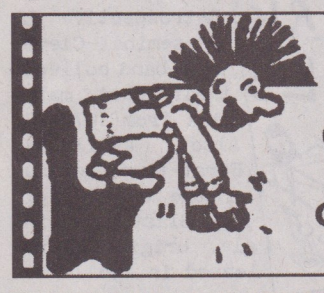


BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

THOSE LACKING IMAGINATION TAKE REFUGE IN REALITY

Happy New Year. Welcome to 2015. Goodbye to Language. I was very amused when I heard eighty-three year old French director Jean-Luc Godard made a 3D film **Goodbye to Language 3D**. Naturally, this isn't the average Hollywood 3D blockbuster. It is a beautiful and frustrating film.

Like most Godard films, **Goodbye to Language 3D** is not a clear narrative. There are lots of people talking. They are discussing philosophies and making abstract observations. The underlying discussion focuses on life. There is a soliloquy about the usefulness of the thumb followed by a few shots of people using that thumb to flick the screens on their smartphones. People talk about books and Hitler. There is nudity and a cute dog. There is moment of action when someone may have been shot off screen, but few details are shared. Most of it feels as if you are just stuck in your own head thinking about various things while something more exciting is happening close-by.

The 3D in **Goodbye to Language 3D** is the most creative use I have seen for it. There is no attempt to hide the fact that you are watching a film. The screen's boundaries, present as 3D images, get cut off going in and out of the box, allowing the viewer to be extra aware of watching a film. One of the funnier and more jarring uses occurs when two people are on the screen together and then one walks away. Instead of staying on the one or following the other, the 3D effect is split in two, then the shots superimposed one over the other. The first time it happened I laughed out loud. It is so impractical and strange, but it looks really cool.

Goodbye to Language 3D does not need to be in 3D, but it makes it more interesting that it is. However, not for everyone. My friend told me the 3D was what kept him interested in the film. Two people in the very sparse screening I attended walked out halfway through.

An arty French film in 3D should be intriguing enough for any filmgoer, but as great as it is, the problem is there aren't many theaters that can or will show this in 3D. So see it if you get the chance—it's worth it. (goodbyetolanguage3d.com)

There was an exhibit of Robert Frank's photography at Stanford University, which also included a screening of his infamous film **Cocksucker Blues**. **Cocksucker Blues** is a documentary of the Rolling Stones' US tour in 1972. The Stones had just released *Exile on Main Street* and had not been in the United States since a fan was stabbed at their Altamont concert in 1969. The band was also at the height of their hedonistic rock star period. Needless to say, the film isn't a flattering portrait of the band.

Cocksucker Blues has never been officially released. Although the Rolling Stones hired Frank to make a documentary of the tour, they were not happy with the result. The band sued Frank to prevent its release. An argument ensued as to who actually owned the film. As a result, the film can only be screened four times per year with Frank present. He did not appear at the screening at Stanford, but I guess I will assume he was there.

If you're wondering why the Rolling Stones object to the film, you just need to watch it. It depicts everything that makes rock stars annoying. It's not just the drug use, the hotel room destruction, or the groupies. It is just the way they talk to people and each other. There is one scene of the band performing live with Stevie Wonder. Wonder is singing one of his hits with the Stones backing him up. Frank shoots the scene from the side of the stage. He catches one of the horn players whispering with the guy next to him and placing his drink on the piano while Wonder is playing.

Most punk documentaries like to show that funny shot of Keith Emerson double-handedly playing a wall of keyboards while wearing a sparkly jumpsuit as the reason punks rebelled against music in the '70s. What really annoyed me about the music at the time, and still does, was everything we see in **Cocksucker Blues**. Frank captures the scene too realistically for the band to handle. It is painful to watch and I can imagine even more so for the band themselves. Yet, that is what makes it fascinating. Rock stars are horrible people. How they make music that manages to appeal to average people will always remain a mystery to me.

In a 180 degree turn is **Hardcore Norfolk: A Story of Rock'n'Roll Survival**, the history of the Norfolk, VA music scene from the early days of rock'n'roll until the present day. If you are like me, you may be thinking, "I know a few bands from Norfolk, but how much of a scene can there be?" You will be pleasantly surprised.

Hardcore Norfolk: A Story of Rock'n'Roll Survival starts with Gary U.S. Bonds who had hits in the 1950s and 1960s. Bonds is interviewed claiming to have started the "Norfolk Sound" which the Beatles, among others, tried to emulate. As skeptical as I was at the beginning, as the history goes on to cover Gene Vincent, Dean Kohler, and Ida Sands throughout the '60s it seems they are on to something. As with other scenes, the bands expand in to hippy, psychedelic, punk, garage, pop and most other genres of rock.

The aspect of **Hardcore Norfolk: A Story of Rock'n'Roll Survival** that really sells the story is the enthusiasm everyone seems to have for their town and the bands that come from it. The history is laid out band-by-band and fellow musicians, fans and even mothers share anecdotes and raves about each. Whereas bigger scenes like to revise their own histories with the more important bands making sure their place in history is secure, Norfolk musicians and fans are not worried about their underdog status. It is shown as a badge of honor. Various people acknowledge that some bands would have been bigger if they came from somewhere else, but that's how it goes.

There is an extended section of **Hardcore Norfolk: A Story of Rock'n'Roll Survival** devoted to the Candy Snatchers and particularly their deceased guitar player Matthew Odietus. Having known Odietus, it made me extra sad. He was one of my favorite guitar players. It was a nice tribute and also bass player Willy Johns give some credit to *MRR* for helping out the band. When Odietus was featured on the cover of our mag people outside of Norfolk finally started to go see the band.

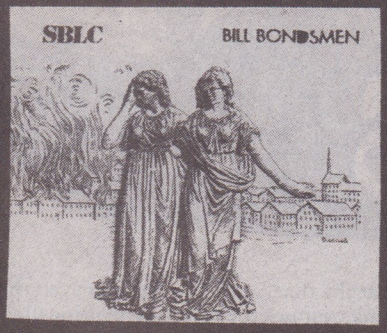
The DVD of **Hardcore Norfolk: A Story of Rock'n'Roll Survival** includes two DVDs. One has the director's cut of the documentary and the other includes a bunch of bonus features including outtakes, videos and band interviews. (hardcorenorfolk.com, $18 ppd.)

I had seen **Altered States** when it was released in 1980. My friend's father took three of us to see it. I don't recall why. I can't imagine we wanted to see it. Since then I have always wanted to spend some time in an isolation tank. Recently, as a birthday gift, I finally got my wish. As a follow-up to the experience, I figured I should see **Altered States** again. Although the isolation tank does have a role in the film, I was surprised that was what I walked away with.

Altered States is the story of a University researcher who is conducting experiments on schizophrenics using an isolation tank. He decides to try the tank himself to see what they experience. He becomes somewhat obsessed with it. When those studies have concluded, he loses access to the tank. He begins other things, but his time in the tank is still in his mind. After a trip to Mexico where he participates in a ritual involving a mushroom potion, during which he kills a lizard, he returns to the United Sates with a jar of the concoction. He finds another isolation tank and begins experimenting, combining the drug with the sensory deprivation of the tank. It all starts getting wild as he begins to regress into early incarnations of man.

Altered States is directed by Ken Russell so the religious and drug imagery is a bit over the top. I am really surprised I wanted to experience sensory deprivation because of this film. I unfortunately did not have any hallucinatory religious experiences (I tried) nor did I regress to my primitive state. However, I also didn't take a Mexican mushroom-based drug either. There's always next time.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, c/o Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. No guest list necessary. carolynkeddy.com



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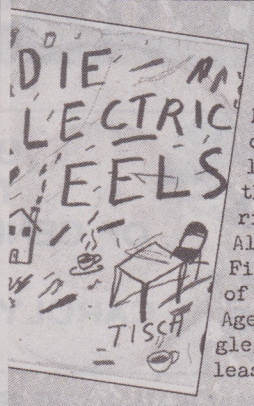

electric eels "die electric eels" LP

Retrospective LP of seminal Cleveland band collects their best material from 1974-75. Also available: First-time reissue of the eels' "Spin Age Blasters" single, originally released in 1981.

mailorder: LP - $16 / CD - $13

MODERNETTES "Teen City" 12-inch/CD

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mailorder: 12" - $16 / CD - $9.50

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We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(AP) Ari Perezdiez
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(BA) Mike Battleaxe
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(CR) Camylle Reynolds
(DG) Dan Goetz
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(GB) Graham Booth
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(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RM) Ryan Murphy
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(SZ) Shit Zoo
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

ACHILLES / PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP – split LP

There is something reverberating and hypnotic about this mangel D-beat. You know this formula well, and it will sink you lower and lower into the kang tomb you are looking for. The PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP side spirals down into a maelstrom of depressive Swedish hardcore. The most unique thing about this is they sample Bill Maher! Current events! I'm all about that sample ACHILLES picks things up from the morose beatdown and moves toward a more death/nu-metal hardcore mix. This deathcore is nothing new, but the production is dense and is a complementary reflection to the PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP D-beat side. Some very cool anarcho-punk basslines under all the aggression. "Not An Option" is the discordant standout track here. Pretty fucking kickass, I must say. The vocalist of ACHILLES fires off with a sinister rhythm, albeit pretty tough-core. I appreciate the controlled militant execution of both sides; same flavor, but each would definitely get totally different "stereotypical" labels making for a solid sampler. (JR)
(Grind Promotion / Halvfabrikat / Phobia / Svoboda)

ACID BABY JESUS – "Vegetable/Brain Damage in Athens City"

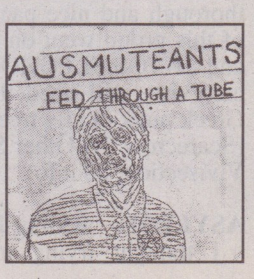
Two tracks presented here as a teaser for their upcoming LP. This mysterious Greek band of mushroom-headed travelers deals in organ-drenched psychedelic punk, channeling the likes of JULIAN COPE, the STOOGES, NORMAN GREENBAUM, and even FAT WHITE FAMILY. At once retro and completely contemporary, ACID BABY JESUS could be going places, or they could disappear onto a remote Greek island to resurface in twenty years with enough material for thirty lost albums. (AM)
(Slovenly)

ΑΔΙΕΞΟΔΟ / ΓΕΝΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΧΑΟΥΣ – split LP

This is the vinyl pressing of a 1984 split cassette tape between two seminal Greek punk bands, ADIEXODO (DEAD END) and GENIA TOY HAOUS (CHAOS GENERATION), subtitled "Καλή Σας Όρεξη (meaning bon appetit). The tracks pulled for this release are basically the first official recordings these bands had, recorded in 1983 and put to tape a year later with six tracks per band. When looking back, 30 years after their formation, it's clear these bands have a pretty varied palette of sounds (always rooted in punk and hardcore) but, as is often the case with first recorded output, these tracks hold a special crude power. So glad it was recovered form the punk annals and put to wax! Compiled on this split record are all twelve of the split cassette tracks, including anti-pig masterpieces "Μπασταρδοκρατία" ("Bastardocracy") by CHAOS GENERATION and "Εξακρίβωση Στοιχείων" ("Identification") by ADIEXODO, plus live tracks for each band: two live recordings from CHAOS GENERATION from a March 1985 live show in Yiannena (a city in northern Greece), and three from ADIEXODO from a live show at Kyttaro Club in Athens (which funnily enough still exists!) one month later, in April 1985. If the *Diataraxi* comp is a starting point for exploring Greek punk, then that tape was, theoretically, the precursor to the material these two bands contributed to that record. CHAOS GENERATION play exasperated, negative punk with dark post-punk nuances, while ADIEXODO deliver raw, aggressive hardcore with throaty vocals; both political by default. Most definitely a must for any Greek punk enthusiast, or anyone with an interest in early European punk and hardcore. I mean, look at it! The cover looks *punk as fuck* and it comes with a foldout insert, lyrics to each song and translations so you don't feel left out on the subversive genius contained within! Stoked to get a reviewer copy! (LA)
(B-Other Side / Scarecrow)

ALARM – "Season of the Snake" EP

Solid punk from this French vegan anarcho band out of the city of Grenoble recalling a darker RVIVR but less pop, a bit MISFITS-y, and rock'n'roll in the way that NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS can still be punk as shit but with that rock edge. Vocals are very much JOAN JETT—strong, deep and charming. The first song, "Season of the Snake," instantly caught my attention with its clean herky-jerky bass throb and simplistic melody. Lucky me, I get the reviewer copy! Apparently ALARM just did a tour in Brazil, perhaps they are headed to the States next? Keep an eye out. Released on an absurd amount of labels. (CR)
(Break the Silence / Contre-Choc / I Love Cops / Kak 40 / Les Nains Aussi / No Gods No Masters / Tocsin)



ANGRY DEAD PIRATES – "Garage Music For Mind And Body" LP

This shit's sick! Dunno what it is about French Fries playing garage music, but they got it down pat. Not annoying, not über retro-sounding, and not super turdy 2014 recording garbage—just totally effortless shit. I like organ garage and their farfisa sound is killer, up front and not too noodle-y. Hard to think of a good comparison, but for now I'll say they're like a little mellower/darker sounding LYRES with broken English vocals and some female backing vox. (GB)
(Frantic City)

ANIMALS AND MEN – "Don't Misbehave in the New Age/Machines"

Extremely satisfying caveman slap of the drums and three chords move it along, while the almost talked vocals give it a cold vibe. In general it sounds like punk from England in 1979. (You guys, it is!) Here and there we get a fucking harmonica that lends it a strange but refreshing Americana vibe. I keep waiting for a keyboard to chime in but it doesn't—equally refreshing. Think about these two things equally: Messthetics and the fact that the two main players in this jam met at an ADAM AND THE ANTS gig (note band name). (MM)
(Danger)

ΑΠΟΓΝΩΣΗ – "Δυο Λεπτά Πριν / Dyo Lepta Prin" LP

No stone is left unturned as we continue our journey of '80s punk discoveries. Though this journey sometimes yields sub par or uninteresting vinyl outputs that would have been better off remaining in obscurity, most of the time if the recording comes from Eastern Europe or the Balkans, it's going to be at least interesting to me. In this case we have a Greek treasure that is both great and interesting! The A-Side of this handsome LP contains two studio sessions from 1985: one that was originally supposed to be included on the classic *Diataraxi Koinis Isihias* compilation the same year, and another six-song session that only got released on a split tape with ADIEXODO in 1987. The first three songs are kinda sloppy and rudimentary pogo-punk; the second session, with the weird electronic drums and rawer sound, is a bit more compelling. The B-Side features a totally coherent but maybe unnecessary live recording from 1985. This isn't as mandatory as recent Greek reissues like EX-HUMANS or ADIEXODO, but it's a really thorough and nice package, and members of this group went on to play in NAYTIA and EKTOS ELEGHOU, so collectors and archivists will need this to complete the Greek punk family tree! (MA)
(Scarecrow / B-Other Side / Stand Against Vivisection, no info)

ASYLUM – "Riding High?" CD

I thought trying to mix D-beat and MOTÖRHEAD was a trend that had long since passed, so boy was I surprised when I got this piece of wax spinning. I remember a time when SKITKIDS were putting out records that sounded like INEPSY, who were putting out records that were just a better adaptation of mid-period DISCHARGE, by way of Lemmy Kilmeister. (I'm no elder statesman of punk either; I feel like I still have my youth about me.) I feel like if this band had a "Right to Ride" style AMEBIX track on it, the circle would be complete (so to speak). I kinda felt that way about the opening track "Riding High." The lyrics "Riding high on the road to hell / And this must be the place" could totally be about riding your sweet hog into an apocalyptic waste, but I feel like they're just alluding to society. More of a Sartre "hell is other people" kinda thing, I guess. This record totally hits a stride though. Every song tackles the worthlessness of humans and society, without going into too much depth, and is completely driving. The guitars are crunchy, solos over crushing bass, and the ever-prevalent thump of the D-beat. Everything on this record can be taken at face value. It's formulaic, but I totally dig the formula. You really can't go wrong with the DISCHARGE/Motörpunk vibe because, even if it's not your thing, you'll still tap your feet and shake your head. Good record, all in all. I hope this band does a LP so I can hear longer songs with more guitar solos. For fans of: LARP-ing, scarves and leather jackets, and Midwest tours. (MW)
(Vinyl Conflict)

ATERPE – "Ez Zan Hil" EP

The first 7" from Thailand's ATERPE after a number of compilation appearances is a one-sided lathe-cut EP with two songs. An interesting band that sinsg in the Basque language, the thoughtful, emotive lyrics are translated into English—songs about humanity and humane treatment of the earth, and holding on to dreams. The music is swirling, basic, thumping hardcore with some mid-1980s Dischord Records meanderings, especially in the bass playing, with snotty scowled lyrics vaguely spitting in the direction of *Black Dots*-era BAD BRAINS. Includes a sticker! Cool. (KS)
(Txoriene)

AUSMUTEANTS – "Fed Through A Tube/Arguments"

Two short, thrashy songs from everyone's latest fave Australian band AUSMUTEANTS. The first is a re-recording of "Fed Through A Tube" from their first release, the *Split Personalities* cassette, now with full band sound. "Taste buds are no friends of mine." The B-Side, "Arguments," is a new one. Both are lo-fi punkers with synths just barely peeking out from behind the guitars. One of the best bands I've seen this year—so good I saw them in two states. (CK)
(Total Punk)

AUSMUTEANTS – "Order of Operation" LP

When I reviewed AUSMUTEANTS' previous eponymous LP, in the pages of this here magazine some months ago, I said something to the effect of, "These songs are so moronic that it belies that these guys are smarter than that." Then, those shitheads went and proved me wrong with their 7" *Stale White Boys Playing Stale Black Music*, wherein they included some homophobic art and a song that could be similarly construed if it weren't so unbelievably idiotic. Now I sit with their newest LP, direct to the States this time, and it's all very underwhelming. We have thirteen songs of synth driven punk—oh wait, mostly it's just new wave. Seriously, some of these could be CARS songs, if Ric Ocasek was even worse at writing lyrics. It's like listening to fucking *Candy-O* on the wrong speed. The best song on here sounds like a real B-list BLONDIE jam. The vocals are so yelping the entire time I feel like a small dog is jumping up and down on a Casio. Add that to the fact that there's a song about social media and you have one big, forgettable, waxy turd! (LP)
(Goner)

THE BASICKS – "Take A Ride" CD

Fuck. Why me God? What is the purpose of crap like this? All the danger and rebellion taken out of punk, wrung out and filtered down into a goofy cartooned covered compact disc with songs like "Werewolf, My Baby and Jackie Daniels." Hot Topic stopped doing punk so I don't know who this brilliance is aimed at. RANCID, OP IVY, SOCIAL DISTORTION? Feces in a bubblegum wrapper. (RO)
(self-released, no info)

BETHISBELL – "We Are the Gods!" CD

There's a promo thing that says this is a psychedelic band that people who like IGGY POP and DAVID BOWIE will dig, so obviously I approach with extreme caution. I shouldn't have…shouldn't have approached, that is. I should have walked away. Even as a somewhat accurately self-described "psychedelic grunge punk and indie rock project," this is insipid and boring. (WN)
(self-released)

BETTER OFF DAMNED – "Endless Fight" CD

BETTER OFF DAMNED plays fairly basic, by-the-numbers, "old school" hardcore punk. Every chord progression sounds like it came out of a punk band generator app and the vocals lazily follow the lead of the other instruments in the band, rather than trying to transform this mess into something exciting. It's like that feeling of seeing a punk band comfortably play in a sports bar rather than a basement. (GH)
(self-released)

BILL BONDSMEN / SBLC – split EP

Detroit is well represented here. BILL BONDSMEN deliver a track of intricate, mid-tempo hardcore. Not my favorite material of theirs, but it keeps bouncing around in my head. I like it, but it lacks the hooks to keep me coming back—a great sound more than a great song. Not so with SBLC. You may remember them from their late '80s/early '90s incarnation as SCREAMING BLOODY LEPER CHILDREN. After a ten-year hiatus, they're back as SCREAMING BROTHERS OF THE LAST CRUSADE. The old name was better, but this song kicks ass, a driving, straightforward ripper I can hear again and again. I've been into singles recently, and this is another fine example. No lyrics are provided, but the screened, monochromatic sleeve comes with a wax seal, classy! 300 were made. (JM)
(Rust on the Blade, no info)

BITCHWAX – "Ride With Bitchwax" CD

Let's see. This band is called BITCHWAX. The cover of this CD is a cartoon naked woman driving a miniature Jeep Wrangler. They sound like a third-rate DWARVES covering AC/DC. They want to pulverize the Pope yet worship Lemmy (they say so!). The first song is a love song called "Fuck 'Em." And for some fucking reason, they registered this with ASCAP, as if copyright infringement of this record is any more of a possibility than eventual time travel or resurrection. (DG)
(Assman)

BLACK RAINBOW – LP

This is a pretty typical, run-of-the-mill pop punk record except for one great exception: the vocals, which turn what is musically typical of the Chattanooga/region rock sound into a great record. Those familiar with this band or its lineage will know what to expect but Ivy does things just a little differently here. There is more singing, things don't sound forced, it flows better. There is still that bit of a gruff edge and the lyrics are still struggling between hope and despair but this just works better than it has in the past. The recording is improved but that can't explain it all. I suppose if you're going to do the same thing over and over again, the best way to keep it interesting is to get better at it. (PA)
(Starcleaner)

THE BLIND SHAKE – "Breakfast of Failures" CD

The driving monotony of "Old Lake" hooked me almost immediately, and I found myself grooving super hard on a band that is light years from my typical musical comfort zone. The BLIND SHAKE take garage punk guitars and make them *heavy* before sending the whole sound to Jupiter and back, and before crafting transfixing tunes that defy pigeon holes. Yeah, it's kinda psych, but in the way a dark wet alley is psychedelic after one too many of your favorite adult beverages, and the title track is a fukkn interstellar freight train driven by more buzzsaw guitars than a mere passenger could possible count. I know I'm missing reference points because *Breakfast of Failures* is on Goner and not a Polish powerviolence label, but I'm not missing the fact that this is the best audio slab to cross my path is a long while. Apparently this is their sixth, so I guess I have my homework assignment. (WN)
(Goner)

THE BLOODHOUNDS – "Let Loose!" CD

The BLOODHOUNDS are an East LA bluesy rock band, with an early rock'n'roll style and an old timey feel utilizing banjo, washboard and kazoo in addition to the guitars and drums. They have a very laid-back, enjoyable sound. I picture them performing for their neighbors on a Saturday afternoon at the local VFW hall. It's fun for all ages. (CK)
(Alive)

BREAKOUT – "True Crime" EP

Not your average hardcore record! Not sure if these are rock anathemas or face splitting frustration jams. Either way, I'm rock'n'rolling this shit at full blast on the stereo, can't do it any other way. Taking a page from the LUMPY playbook, BREAKOUT have a strange appeal as more than just a punk band with a punk sound. This record takes tone, song structure and vocals from all over the spectrum and makes it work. So stoked, can't wait for more! (RM)
(Grave Mistake)

THE BROOD – "No Way Out" EP

When I first put this on, I was like, "Whoa! This sounds like WITCH HUNT"—and apparently this is Janine's new band. This has pretty formulaic crust/hardcore elements with wailing guitar hooks, dual vocals and Scandi-influences galore. However, it's still holding my interest by the B-Side. Get your hands on this if you can! (AP)
(self-released)

BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS – "Culture Demanufacturer" LP

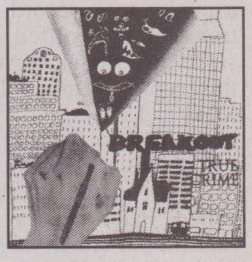
Stripped down to the most primal elements used to write punk "tunes," BUCK BILOXI comes at us with another release of just that. Do not, under any circumstances, expect anything more. If you are looking for awesome musicianship, cleverly crafted music, or some crap like that, stay away from this party cuz it ain't for you, fuckheads. (MS)
(Total Punk)

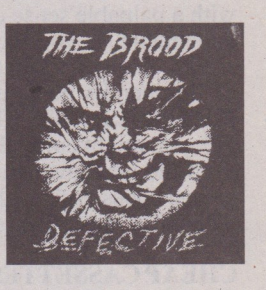
BUZZCOCKS – "The Way" CD

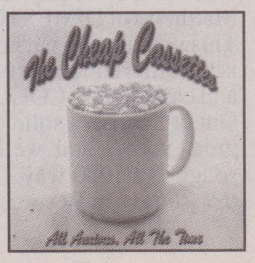
These UK punk legends are certainly one of my favorite bands of all time, but to be honest, their releases post early singles and first three LPs have been uneven. Fueled by a younger rhythm section these days, their latest full-length is a pretty rocking release. It still has that Pete Shelley weirdness at times and the variety of Steve Diggle lead vocals, as well as Pete's which are a 50-50 split here. I wasn't really big on the initial track used to promote this, but there are much better songs on here. Diggle's live enthusiasm comes across well. I like this more than their 2006 *Flat-Pack Philosophy* but probably not as much as their 2003 self-titled release. No worries of this being another *Modern*, their weakest full-length. Also a band that still puts on a great show live with their hits a plenty. (RL)
(self-released)

CADAVER EM TRANSE – LP

Based in São Paulo and featuring members of RAKTA and SPEED KILLS, this is a refreshing take on goth-inspired post-punk that escapes some of the vampirical trappings that tend to mark this style. I'm reminded of CHRISTIAN DEATH, but with the driving quality of KILLING JOKE. The







vocals however, sung both in English and Portuguese, are unmistakably and aggressively punk. For me, there is a certain musicality characterizing Brazilian Portuguese punk vocals and I can't help but compare the singing here a bit to COLERA. My favorite track thus far is "Inverted," where the infectious guitar lead woven through the whole length of the song strikes a delicate balance between chorus-tinged goth and the delightful jangle of surf-punk. The rhythm is quite varied and takes the listener on a journey through hammering beats and slower, more experimental percussion. Everything comes together with groovy bass lines and intriguing soundscapes/effects: totally multidimensional and awesome. The record is well packaged too, featuring an insert with all the lyrics and some incredible artwork. (LT)
(Dama Da Noite, no info / Nada Nada)

CASTRO – "The River Need" CD

To American ears, some European punk records have a strange quality of fusion. By the second song on the Norwegian band CASTRO's debut full length *The River Need*, the listener is treated to almost Am Rep style two-note rawk riffs, chords possibly lifted from a mid-period FUGAZI record, vocals that are alternatively sassy and wailing, and some parts played in 2/4 time. It's a bit of a mixed bag, especially when some vaguely THIN LIZZY-esque leads pop their heads up like gophers a couple of tracks later. At its core, this is a punky rock record, with metal's neatly trimmed and coiffed crunch laid over the sickly proceedings. At its better moments, this record resembles the recent SURVIVAL KNIFE LP. At its least interesting, this band writes the political equivalent of ballads over tepid and defanged IRON MAIDEN parts. Oh, they also wrote a song called "Paleface" that I'm not sure is about racism, but either way it feels like a move in poor taste. However, even when I call a miss, the fact that these songs are written with a palpable sense of craft and variety is undeniable. If you like metallic rock with a punk tinge, or even if you are a follower of this band's pedigree (ANGKOR WAT, ISRAELVIS, LIFE BUT HOW TO LIVE IT), you might enjoy this release—possibly even the beatdown part that closes out the second bonus track on the CD version. (LP)
(Boss Tuneage / Kong Tiki)

CHEAP CASSETTES – "All Anxious All The Time" CD

A new power pop band featuring Charles Matthews of DIMESTORE HALOES fame. This guy always puts out good pop and this is no different. A very heavy PLIMSOULS and early PAUL COLLINS BEAT feel here. Out of Seattle, a solid ten-song release with great vocals and well crafted power pop songs in a 1980 way. (RL)
(Cassettes On Record)

CHEW TOYS – LP

A queercore duo out of LA, with a diverse range, super drenched in '90s stylings over straightforward garagey pop punk. It's like they plucked little nuggets off of OFFSPRING, BREEDERS, WEEZER, and MR. T EXPERIENCE songs and made a cohesive sound for themselves. Full of self-degradation and silliness, with songs about lusting over "Beantown Boys," an "I Hate Xmas" song (Don't we all?), and lyrics like "Garage metal and punk rock / work best on my cock" and "Like all good cowboys / Larry's got two morals / He's versatile at butt sex / And famous for his oral," keep things, um, light. I'm sure Fat Wreck fans will like it. (CR)
(Noise Barn)

CIDER – "Out to Get Me" EP

Well, here it is, the so-declared "Last Stop for Western Civilization," CIDER's debut EP from 1994, which is considered the first record out of the fabled '90s Clevo-HC scene that spawned such household names as H-100s, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, INMATES, and so on. Though I'm generally a fan of that scene, CIDER has never really stuck with me and this reissue, while nicely put together, doesn't really change that. Nonetheless, it's cool to have *Out to Get Me* available again and it comes with a recent interview about the band's experience pioneering Cleveland's unique brand of nasty, fast hardcore with that unmistakable Ohio attitude. "Sick of This World" is undeniable even if you're not exactly a paying member of the CIDER Appreciation Society. Check it out if you don't already know. (SZ)
(My Mind's Eye / Ultra Sonido, no info)

CJ RAMONE – "Understand Me?" EP

Barf. I guess everybody's gotta make a living. I hope Dez is getting *paid* for the "killer" "Rise Above" "cover" on the B-Side. I guess if you collect Fat Wreck stuff you'll need to add this one to your steaming dung heap! (GB)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

CLASS OF '86 – "Future on Fire" LP

This is a killer album! Fans of melodic punk, you don't have to be relegated to listening to high school favorites anymore thanks to CLASS OF '86! This Twin Cities outfit has brought the gruff reality of I SPY and the long sought touch of *Less Talk, More Rock*-era PROPAGANDHI back to our turntables! An amazing album start to finish, brandishing catchy leads and poignant lyrics that will stay with you well after the record is over. Unfortunate album art seems a bit misleading, but don't be fooled! The world has been without this record for far too long…nailed it. (RM)
(self-released)

CONTORTURE/INSIDIOUS PROCESS – split EP

There's an edge to Sweden's CONTORTURE that grabs you instantly—galloping Scandi D-beat rarely comes off this uncompromisingly in your face, but these women are searing. The leads are sparse and buried beneath a wall of guitars and riff after monstrous riff. Vocals are brittle barks that ride on top of a churning sea of mania…this shit is goooood. Fellow Swedes INSIDIOUS PROCESS are a (only slightly) more subdued version of the same animal. More firmly planted in the metallic crust camp, their attack didn't grab me at first…but then the scream that follows the intro to "Filth of the Earth" ripped my face off and the band launched into what might be the best track on the whole record. Bordering on Motörpunk without ever deviating from their chosen path, these kids just fukkn smoke. Very solid release. (WN)
(Distro Rakkos / Halvfabrikat / Not Enough / Svododa)

COPYCATS – "An Idea Dies" LP

Listen up, because this one's great, straight outta Granada in the autonomous region of Andalusia! Super catchy, poppy, guitar-driven garage rock, with unabashed punk '77 flares and lots of very memorable, well orchestrated hooks and choruses. Their name and the post-modern subtitle concept of "an idea dies…another is born" matches the smart and excited execution of their material and each song makes me stir in my seat as I think of what might have inspired them: the GUN CLUB, WIRE, the FLESH EATERS, the VIBRATORS, the JAM. There are even moments when the singer sounds like an agitated Mick Jagger (and that's not necessarily a bad thing, an homage perhaps to the '60s influence they undeniably have but do not flaunt) though most of the time he carries off a blaze, cheeky attitude akin to Darby Crash, Jay Reatard, or Trent Ruane of the MUMMIES. Don't let all these poached sonic trinkets mislead you. The songwriting is catchy and not overly complicated (yes, there's an opening riff that sounds like "London Calling") but they do a terrific and creative job of mixing their influences into something genuine, grander, and ultimately their own. Some bands end up being bad imitators of their heroes, and then some bands just *do* actually sound like they fell through a time portal. Socially conscious lyrics in English, great cover artwork and, all in all, a really nice surprise. After about 50 listens it still has me hooked! (LA)
(CCATS)

CP/M – "Hang" EP

Noisy, plodding dirges that fall somewhere between ARSENAL and KILLDOZER, though perhaps darker than either, so I guess they fall somewhere *below*

the two aforementioned acts. Vocals are shouted in the late '80s noise rock manner (see aforementioned artists once again) and the two tunes are derivative and repetitive almost to a fault. Almost. It's like KARP if KARP didn't *rock*, or any number of guitar-driven noise rock bands if they had the stones to keep it weird. CP/M lure you in with monotony and reward you with more monotony (that's what you get, dumbass) and when it's over…you just want more. This band would be better served by the 12" format, but this slab is an excellent start. Powerful shit. (WN)
(self-released)

LAS CRUCES / SECCIÓN FEMENINA – split EP

LAS CRUCES kills on this! Five blasts of simple spunky punk with a deranged guitar tone and a vocal style with inherent hooks. The result can't be faked—pure attitude and charisma, somewhere between ULTIMO RESORTE and NERVOSAS. On the flip side SECCIÓN FEMENINA lays down some garage punk, heavy on the distorted bass. So heavy in fact that it drowns out the drums and makes the guitar seem secondary. The song ideas are okay, but the execution does little to grab me. Definitely pick this up for the LAS CRUCES alone! (MA)
(Blondes Must Die)

CULANDRA / ZOMBI PUJOL – "De Les Barricades A Les Tragaperres" split LP

A Spanish collaboration here, and Barcelona's CULANDRA gives us rough-edged, peppy hardcore. There are some Oi!-style graphics on the huge, foldout insert, and I'd listen to more of that genre if it were closer to this sound. The lyrics are translated into Spanish from the various languages they're sung in (English, Japanese, Basque, and perhaps some other Iberian dialects). There's a BLITZ cover and one that's set to an older DEAD KENNEDYS song. After the first few tracks I was ready to move on and having explored it fully, this isn't a side I'd play all the way through. ZOMBI PUJOL is polished, up-tempo hardcore. They benefit from brighter production, tighter songs, and some fun organ on "No Sé in Perquè Hi Torno." Even the double-tracked, melodic vocals sound good. I wouldn't call this side killer all the way through, but the good outweighs the average. (JM)
(Bomba Nuclear, no info / Canya! / Carnùs / Filferro / El Forat / Old Kids Brigade)

THE CURSE – "World Domination" CD

Not the amazing all-female Canadian band but some aging Swedish rockers. This is really long. Not all bad though—some of the more melodic numbers will make you gack, sure, but the good ones have a nice SAINTS, FLAMING GROOVIES, DMZ feel to them. Like a smokey Swedish bar. A tall, past her prime, big-haired blonde in a way-too-short leather skirt. Shaking it. Lots of leopard and a Marlboro hanging out of her smeared lipsticked mouth. Most of her drink watering the sticky floor. Maybe that's just my fantasy but listen and see what you think. (RO)
(Closer)

CUTTHROATS 9 – "Dissent" CD

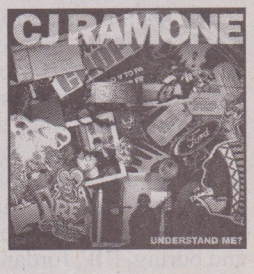
It's unfortunate that every review (including this one) of the new CUTTHROATS 9 record will mention UNSANE…but it's tough to avoid. Chris Spencer started this power trio in San Francisco after that prior power trio in New York took a break in the early '00s (you are forgiven if you found that lineage confusing), they dropped two filthy, churning noise rock steamrollers and then stepped back into the shadows when UNSANE started back up a few years later. Maybe they are cut from the same mold, but where UNSANE grooves, CT.9 just punish—"Hit the Ground" is the closest they have to a hit, but, when Spencer tried to take the grit out of the voice, the only thing left was a manic desperation that competes with his slide guitar for the title of "most disconcerting." Spencer is joined on *Dissent* by the drummer from DEATH ANGEL and the bassist from 16 in this incarnation (that probably helps explain the aforementioned punishment) and the fact that its release will probably fly by most readers of this rag is a shame…sometimes you don't have to jump on the bandwagon to hear the next cool thing. In a modern punk landscape, where bands seem to be trying to emulate the noise rock and grunge sounds of twenty years ago, many of those bands would be well served by listening to the sounds of the people who created those sounds in the first place. (WN)
(Reptilian)

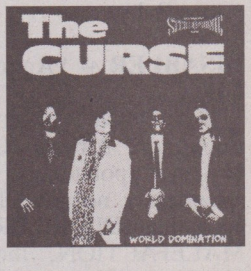
DARK TIMES – "Give" LP

The first full-length from this Oslo band, eagerly awaited by this punk! Ladies meet in women-only music classes, cover the STOOGES, SONIC YOUTH, and BLACK FLAG at their first gig before realizing that writing your own songs is cool and easy, and subsequently unleash genius sounds into this world. What's not to like? A few years, a line-up shift, a tape and two singles later, this LP lacks some of the burliness that I loved so much about their earlier recordings. The band explores new sonic territory here: AK properly sings on the A-Side's closer "Never Know" and several tracks—like opener "Be Cool"—edge up on garage tendencies. All of these songs are *tuff* but the record picks up on the flip when they get a little angrier and a little faster. "I hate you almost as much as I hate me"—you're moshing! The more straightforward hardcore numbers would have made a killer 7" for those of us with attention spans too short for a LP, but there are no duds here, just some unexpected variety. I wanna crawl around a pit full of femmes to this stuff—US tour, please! Thanks to Maren Karlson's distinctive design, this is guaranteed to be the only record I like this year that features buxom women in bikinis on the cover. (GA)
(Sheep Chase)

DEATHWISH – "Tailgate" 12"

Finally, one of the truly mythical, long-lost giants of American…nay, *World*… hardcore is unearthed from the sweeping sands of time. In December of 1983 this Boston hardcore powerhouse recorded seven songs with Jimmy Dufour at Radiobeat Studios in Kenmore Square with the intention of mixing three songs—"Tailgate," "Break the Chains" and "Condemned for Life"—for airplay on local college radio. They did just that. In 1989 those three songs ended up on vinyl via a semi(?)-legit 7" on the Armory Arms imprint, and again in 1992 on a much-less-legit repress on Lost and Found, with those reels and the four unreleased tracks assumed to be lost for good in a dumpster following the shuttering of Radiobeat.





Noooope, this one jerkoff seems to have had 'em the whole time, knowing full well that the band was looking for them. They did *eventually* get 'em back, thank fuck. Anyway, DEATHWISH played within that classically-Boston realm of nasty, first wave straightedge hardcore, fitting seamlessly alongside the bulldozing power of SS DECONTROL, IMPACT UNIT, DYS and LAST RIGHTS. With the huge guitars that Radiobeat was known for, and the remix job here by Don Zientara (MINOR THREAT, et al.) sounds incredible. I highly suggest that if you think this record is just another attempt to milk American Hardcore's glory days for whatever it is they are milking it for, you rethink that and cop this record ASAP. In my humble opinion, this material seeing a vinyl reissue is about as important as any other record that will come out in 2014, and I find reissues counterproductive and boring. RIP, Jordan Wood. Now we can all hold our collective breath until progress on the DXA record kicks back up. (JU)
(Disclaim)

DIRTY FENCES – "Ladies Choice" EP

Three tracks of slurring, swaying, swill-soaked party rock'n'roll here... something about the vocals and delivery have me imagining what it would sound like if GANG GREEN played BBQ-sauce smothered garage punk instead of hardcore. There's nothing bad about this by any stretch, but it just lacks something in the energy department. (AM)
(Oops Baby)

DISABLER – "Aggressive Negativity" CD

The harsh, bleak environment of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada is reflected in the pounding tech metal and relentlessly negative lyrics on this five-song disc. DISABLER isn't far off from MALEFACTION, though they temper blastbeats with tempo changes, longer songs (two or three minutes) and even a brief quiet part. The band is practiced, competent and intense, but not so exceptional that I'll be revisiting the CD. (JM)
(self-released)

DRONEZ – "215" flexi

There isn't much information about this band online, but according to the back cover of this flexi they are a two-piece from Philadelphia. I hear drums, guitar, bass and vocals on this recording—maybe it's a studio project, but I saw that they played a couple of shows. Really raw, throaty vocals, while the guitar tone is gritty enough to not put it on the weirdly overproduced hardcore D-beat side of things but clean enough to not make it raw punk. The second song, "The Enemy," has an almost identical riff to "Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing" by DISCHARGE. That's probably what most bands of this style are going for nowadays. The artwork is pretty cool, and the cover seems to be hand-printed. Definitely a killer first release. (KC)
(self-released)

DUCK & COVER – 10"

This is the sound of bullshit. It's like ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN playing at Claire's in the mall. (RO)
(self-released)

EARN YOUR SCARS – "D.F.L." CD

Straight from the rough as fuck streets of Kolding in Denmark comes a band real Danish hardcorepunkmetalfreaks can be proud of. EARN YOUR SCARS has groove, thin, crunchy guitars, and *two* vocalists. On one track, "Seal the Deal," they also have two guest vocalists from STAB BY STAB making it a four singer track. It's *fucking* out there, man. Not to mention the intro track shouting out hardcore and the "true kids." I'm definitely more down with this than I thought I would be. The record is more DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR and TERROR than other contemporary acts like FORCED ORDER. It has a polished vibe that a lot of top 40 aspiring bands want, which sacrifices a certain amount of soul, but who really cares about that in 2014 anyway? If you're gonna write a hardcore record that tall tee high school kids are gonna buy, then tracks about how everyone's a fake and triggered drum heavy breakdowns definitely help. EARN YOUR SCARS give 'em just that. Respect. For fans of: hot dog on a stick, Cinnabon, G.I. Joe action figures. (MW)
(Schizophrenic Inc.)

EATEN RAW / MISANTHROPIC – split LP

This 12" teams up two D-beat/crust acts from Umeå, united by a modern, vocally-driven take on the sound (read: lots of pick slides and a metallic sense of guitar melodics). Let's start off with MISANTHROPIC, whose side gave me a lot of mixed feelings. The vocals are the real standout here, with a perfect touch of anarcho-punk snot. Even if things are a bit formulaic in the songwriting department, there're still plenty of hooks to pull you along. On the other hand, the drumming, while technically impressive, is way, way too reliant on the double-kick D-beat for my taste, an issue that only gets worse when band left-turns into hardstyle-worthy breakdowns. EATEN RAW has a way more rock'n'roll sound by comparison, definitely lead-heavy but with a nice, loose feel that more metalloid takes on the genre often lack. There are honestly not enough memorable moments to recommend their side too highly, but the direct, stripped-down tone was definitely refreshing to these over-compressed ears. (WB)
(Halvfabrikat)

EX-CRAW – "Extant/Extinct" LP

A post-humous record, this collects their tracks from a couple of prior releases. EX-CRAW hailed from Perth, Australia and made some damn fine hardcore. They seem to do everything right by not just copying a sound, but throwing in different sounds and influences: dual vocalists, excellent production where you can hear every instrument, fast and slow, catchy and sing-along at times, slightly crusty at others, and some nice melodic guitar riffs before tracks rip into the speedy parts. Hell, there is even a track that has a clean riff that could be in a pop punk song but the song rules. A nice reminder that hardcore can be catchy. (MH)
(Cubo de Sangre)

FLESH LIGHTS – "Free Yourself" LP

Weird coincidence: Last night I was on my way to see pervy-named local act FLESH WORLD, and thinking of pervy names, I wondered to myself if there's a band called FLESH LIGHTS. Next thing you know, I run into *MRR*'s Kenny Kaos, who shows me a phone pic of a FLESH LIGHTS record that he just listened to. *The very record I'm reviewing now!* Spooky. To the music: It's poppy punk (maybe even "power pop") in sound, but FLESH LIGHTS don't grab the low hanging fruit of obvious melodies and tired chord progressions—I hate when people say things like "mature songwriting" or "craft" but that's what's going on here. The songs are not catchy in the way advertising jingles or RAMONES songs are, but there are layers to the tunes that will stick with you, a combination of CLOROX GIRLS, GENTLEMAN JESSE, and MARKED MEN. (AM)
(12XU)

FUGAZI – "First Demo" LP

How do you describe a band that has meant so much to so many people, has lived with you for years, that blew you away and taught you that punk could be so much more than mohawks, mosh pits, and a fashion that they try to sell you in magazines? You sure don't bother trying to use musical descriptors. If you've never listened to FUGAZI, then do. If you're sure you don't like it, listen again. Just don't start here despite the fact that this is the beginning. Demos are always a tough call. There are always those couple tracks you've never heard before, or if you have, it was only through fifth generation cassettes. They may not even be the greatest songs but they are always worth hearing. There's one here, "And the Same," which is in the same vein as most of their early stuff. It's not the best but for any fan of the band it is a must. Demos can also be seen as a document of what happened, a way to see the progression of a band, see how they changed over the years. Some of these weren't rerecorded for some time, "Furniture" being the most

obvious example of how a band can sound so much tighter after playing together for years. On the flip side, you might get versions of songs that you love that just aren't as good or not fully realized. Guy's backing vocals on "Waiting Room" are missing that little something that makes the album version so good. "Merchandise" has some extra vocals that the song may not need. All of that is based on having listened to the songs played one way for a very long time, though. Some of it, like the stuff that ended up on *3 Songs*, sounds much the same as the later recorded versions. While you may not choose to listen to these versions over the ones on the proper records, this is definitely a worthwhile document. Liner notes would have been nice. (PA)
(Dischord)

GAFF – "Roach Coffin" LP

Roach Coffin builds from a firm foundation of early Ebullition style hardcore, exploring the melodic side of intensely personal music. They brutally embark on a path of heavy and consuming jams, bashing through six epics on this offering. I found it easy to get lost listening to this record. The drums are something of note, outstanding and impressive beyond their due throughout the entire record. The album as a whole is stylized and done well, but will forever be in the shadow of those drum tracks. (RM)
(What's Left?)

GET HIGH BOYS – "GHB" EP

Pure muck and mire slither on this EP, the debut from these Atlanta punks. Folks who've followed the likes of GG KING and PREDATOR oughta take note, and while I didn't expect anything quite as desperate as this at first glance, I'm still on board with the top-notch neg-vibe punk heard here. The quality hooks sprinkled throughout aren't much of a surprise though; you pretty much know the songs are gonna stick to you with this lot. Good stuff. (MC)
(Die Slaughterhaus)

GINO AND THE GOONS – "Shake It" LP

Florida's Goons continue with their no-frills, good-time rock'n'roll on their sophomore LP. The production is a little beefier here than on their debut, and I'm gonna be an asshole and consider it a demerit, but that's all small potatoes when you can channel SUPERCHARGER and RAMONES with the efficiency that these guys can. Adult babies who spend most of their lives drunk have a new soundtrack for the winter months. Huzzah! (MC)
(Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

GNILE DUŠE – "Vse Je V Skladu S Predpisi…" LP

From my ignorant American understanding of the record sleeve, this is an old Slovenian punk band and these are old tracks from 1979-1980. My knowledge of old Slovenian punk is pretty much zero—maybe I should read that *Maximum Rocknroll* issue? There's a shit ton of short songs on here and some are really good, while some get kind of repetitive thanks to that polka/pogo beat that doesn't stray too often. Wish I knew more about these folks 'cause I'd like to travel back in time and place to pogo my ass off in some shitty Slovenian bunker to these misfits. Na zdravje. (RO)
(Front Rock / Subkulturni Azil)

GRECO'S BACK – "With the Dark Gypsies" CD

Former CRIME bassist (as well as FLAMIN' GROOVIES' original drummer) RON "The Ripper" GRECO returns to the music scene with this seven-song CD. This is not distorted, angst filled punk rock—GRECO's songs resemble NICK CAVE, with introspective storytelling and acoustic guitars. The songs are about San Francisco, with mentions of the Hemlock Tavern, Kezar Stadium, and the Haight. There may be some demons Greco needs to work out or perhaps he's just finally starting to tell his tale. (CK)
(Rebel House)

GULAG BEACH – "North Korean Sun" LP

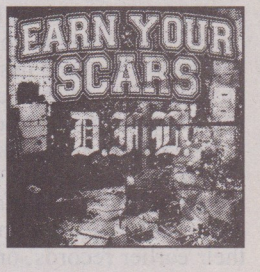
On the surface, this is kind of a weird record: a band from Berlin, anonymously (they wear ski masks) singing pop punk songs in English about the plight of people in North Korea…even their cover of "California Sun," has been changed to "North Korean Sun." According to their story, the original band from North Korea played a show in Berlin and then mysteriously disappeared, so a few German folks took up instruments to carry on their message. (You can read the full story in *MRR* a few issues back.) The lyrics call attention to prison camps, the dictatorship ("supreme leader," if you choose) of Kim Jong-un, child prostitution, and more in North Korea. This LP compiles six newer tracks with six demo tracks, which were previously released on cassette. The music itself is fairly basic melodic punk with predictable song structures inherent to the genre… bouncy and fun sounding, but contrasted by bleak lyrics. The demo tracks sound a little more complete to my ears and the rawness of those recordings leads me to prefer Side B over Side A. Apparently the band is also collecting money from sales of the record to help relocate people from North Korea to China. I'm not sure how they're planning to accomplish that goal, but I'm confident that you can contact them if you're interested. (GH)
(Maniac Attack)

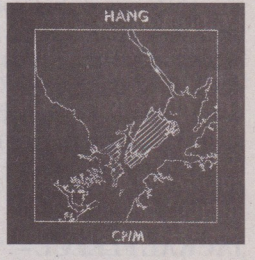
HARSH REALMS – "Pølp" CD

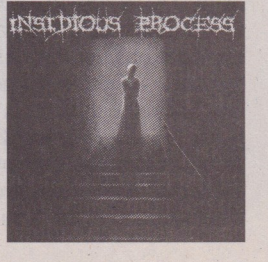
The album opens with a power riff and some somewhat startling metalcore and guitar-porn riff rock but takes on a more consistent identity as a whoa-oh power chord, pop punk sound as it progresses. The songs all have interesting exchanges and movements and plenty of sing-along chants. This album was a bit of a tease to me, and at times I got bored with the generic, played out JAWBREAKER worship sound, but there were enough well-executed hooks to keep me tuning back in. "In Need of Guidance" is a gem, and stands out as a good example of what HARSH REALMS can achieve when all the pieces fit. (DV)
(Shield Recordings)

HOUNDS OF HATE – "Hate Springs Eternal" LP

For anyone not familiar with HOUNDS OF HATE (smell the coffee, what's with you?), they play masterful NYHC akin to BREAKDOWN, SICK OF IT ALL, WARZONE, and similar acts, and are experts at writing involved, memorable songs with huge hooks and production that precisely matches their influences. The same sound, production, and attention to song/riff-writing detail are all still here, and they have gotten tighter as a band, but this record







strikes me as a little more cerebral and a little less straight-up nonstop moshy than their previous efforts, with definite hard rock influence seamlessly interwoven into the NYHC. It may or may not be a coincidence that the riff that opens this record very closely resembles that of "Alan's On Fire" by POISON IDEA, but I hear some *War All The Time* at different points. "Teenage Blues" opens with a straight-up '70s rock riff played at hardcore speed, with solo to match, before gradually settling back into NYHC territory before briefly revisiting the opening riff at the end. The following song has an AC/DC-type riff at one point. At the same time, they also use gang vocals for the first time in a few songs, adding a cool dimension. HOUNDS OF HATE avoid the common "hardcore band's second LP" pitfalls: where bands do either shitty or undistinguished versions of their earlier records, or attempt a different musical direction that is at best beyond their ability or at worst generic and self-indulgent (also known as "maturing"). Instead, they follow up their stellar first LP with a second that retains everything that makes them great as a band, while switching up their sound in a way that is not only still raging and interesting, but also makes this record its own entity in this band's discography. (DG)
(Braddock Hit Factory)

IDIOT IKON / PASSIV DODSHJALP – split LP

This split is a double dose of heavy-duty crust out of Sweden. PASSIV DODSHJALP offers driving crusty melody à la TRAGEDY: super heavy, extra epic and they've got parts to shout along to. What more could you ask for? Their second song is my favorite on the record, with some punishing, almost blackened riffage going on. IDIOT IKON blasts through their side of MOTÖRHEAD-inspired crust and I imagine that these guys would be awesome to see live after more than a few brews. Pretty straightforward, but rockin' stuff. I'm into their discordant guitar leads. All lyrics are in Swedish. Both bands got my blood going, but I liked the PASSIV DODSHJALP side more. Nothing groundbreaking, but a solid record all around. (BA)
(Halvfabrikat / Noise of Hell / Nuclear Fear)

JACKAL FLEECE – "Crackle Peaks" LP

An expansive entry into the ever-bloating annals of noise-rock, this debut offering from JACKAL FLEECE presents a pair of oddballs unafraid to follow their sonic explorations across clashing, contradictory territories. Opening track "Blood In Blood Out" establishes this restless approach from the get-go, with mystic vibes, stoney chanting and pulsating drums that explode into a spastic, paranoid frenzy. Unfortunately, the trimmings consistently outshine the main event, with atmospheric and inventive intros and instrumental segues that resolve time and again into forgettable drum/guitar freakouts. I can appreciate a lot of what's going on here, but without some killer songs to hang your hat on, it all ends up feeling a bit monotonous. (WB)
(self-released)

THE JAGGERNAUTS – "Safe" CD

Slick and intentional anthemic pop (punk?) from Nowhere, Wisconsin (okay, fine, it's Fall Creek, and yes, I've been there). Equal parts melodic punk and theater, WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY is as close as I can get to a comparison, as the JAGGERNAUTS are way out on their own here…listen to "Inspector 12" and you'll know what I mean. "Reach the Beach" is solid and infectious alternative radio rock that ventures into a world I do not need to investigate further, but these dudes are advanced in their approach and execution. This is the kind of record that kinda makes me upset for liking it. (WN)
(self-released)

THE KAAMS – "One to Six" CD

This is retro '60s inspired pop rock'n'roll from Italy—no surprise given the county's love and prolific output of both. The guitars are gangly, the solos are rockin', the vocals poppy with SONICS-styled "yeahs." These guys play a spin the wheel of styles and for them time stopped in the '70s, taking cues from bands such as LOVE, the BEACH BOYS, the KINKS, 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS, the LOLLIPOP SHOPPE, California rock, and a touch of rockabilly, country, and rhythm'n'blues, The lyrics are characteristic of pop like this, about love, love, love; love found, love lost, love denied, love scorned. There are a couple good tracks on here, and on paper this looks good, but this sounds like the evolution of a cover band. Alright but nothing new; good background music for dinner with the folks. (LA)
(Area Pirata / Boss Hoss)

KAKAFONI – "Seizures" EP

It's difficult to find words to describe this, beyond calling it exactly what it is: super generic crust. Mid-tempo, high/low vocals, pick slides just where you'd expect them, everything is exactly as you'd expect it to be here. It's not actively bad, but a record that sounds like this in 2014 gets what it deserves: a shrug of the shoulders and a total "meh". (AU)
(Phobia)

KILL THE HIPPIES – "You Will Live With Us Forever" LP

Andrew, sitting next to me, informed me that this is the same Ohio band from the early '90s. I'm too lazy to look behind me on the shelves and research what they sounded like back then—I'll let their new recording stand on its own merits and not rest on the laurels of past glories. First off, you gotta love a band called KILL THE HIPPIES with Rev. Jim Jones on the cover. It reminds me somewhat of older RANCID VAT with their combination of raunchy rockin' punk and jazzy art-damaged drug rock. There are hints of the URINALS and DILS with male and female vocals. Some of it gets too jazz and funk tempoed for my Hessian ears. "Blood of the Martyrs," "Volcano" and "Story of Nazareth" are top-notch. I picture these folks all living together with lots of pets and maybe a couple of guns. Invite me over for a macrobiotic casserole dinner. Please. (RO)
(Phoenecian MicroSystems, no info)

KOWABUNGA! KID – "Halloween" flexi

Noisy punk from Champaign Urbana, IL, with an aptitude for intensity. The opening riff for "One Foot in the Grave" is nervy and cerebral, then they jump into mid-tempo territory, to crash headfirst into some pedal distortion and knob-turning noise, then back to straight-ahead guitar sawing. "Surf Witchery" reminded me of ORDEN MUNDIAL, with its distorted bass and grazing guitar, buzzing with lo-fi energy. 1-2 pogo drumming kicks in, the guitar meanders and fidgets, the vocals are pure evil in an exasperating CRAZY SPIRIT kind of way. Song structures are there, without being predictable or tepid—if anything it's like the unleashing of spirits on All Saints Day. I can imagine this trio listening to psych and noise rock, followed by black metal, then some electronic experimental shit, and of course some good doses of current USHC. More to discover after the dust settles and I am intrigued. (LA)
(Rat King)

KYTÄNSOITTAJAT – "Töölö Palaa Ja Kvolee" EP

Melodic and anthemic punk tunes on Side A that I'm sure get the crowd singing along with the band. A definite toe-tapper rooted in rock'n'roll formulas with a solid punk edge. Side B has a beautifully sung track that would fall into a rock ballad category but its somber tone makes me wonder about the context or meaning—wish I knew. (MS)
(Blast of Silence)

KYTÄNSOITTAJAT/TRANSENTISET – split EP

First up on this Finnish split is KYTÄNSOITTAJAT, definitely on the poppy and anthemic side of things on one hand and punk rock'n'roll on the other; musically totally rad, reminding me of a slowed down TURBONEGRO with a touch of the STOOGES, and featuring female vocals. The artwork, however, (a cartoon

drawing of a dude hunched over with "exit only" written across his bum) is questionable at best. My ability to interpret the lyrical content is quite limited for obvious reasons, but there is reference to Vikings and a declaration that "Finland will rise again" so I'll just leave it at that! The TRANSENTISET side features a slightly more garage sound. I would describe it as a really appealing mix of RATSIA and the SAINTS; great stuff. Though once again, my Finnish is not so good, but a song with "whore" in the title is going to make me a little reticent, sorry. So if you're into these things, plus a generous dollop of sleaze, you should pick this up. (LT)
(Blast of Silence)

LAGWAGON – "Hang" LP

The latest from one of Fat Wreck's house bands and another solid pop punk effort. I like these guys but have never considered them a favorite of mine. The music on this one takes on a PROPAGHANDI feel at times with the guitar riffing going almost metal. What I don't like is the occasional double time drumming à la NOFX—it's done well but historically I just think it tries too hard to speed up the song. I do like the lyrics. They are almost too good for pop punk; a good problem to have! Fans will love this, as it is no letdown, and newcomers will be impressed as well. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

LEBAKKO – "Elävien Kuolleiden Yö" LP

This four-piece delivers a nice, short LP: up-tempo songs, a lighter guitar tone and they all excel at yellin' together on the choruses. The B-Side has four fun and catchy tracks (one instrumental), all winners, while the A-Side sounds more serious, in line with the lyrics, which (based on the provided translations from their native Finnish into English) mostly dwell on personal pain. These songs had to grow on me, but now I think a pressing of 300 copies is too small. Keep an eye out. (JM)
(PML)

LESTER GREENOWSKI – "It's Nothing Serious But Life" CD

I love this CD! Self proclaimed "Glam Punk," this really reminds me of IAN HUNTER of MOTT THE HOOPLE fame but it also has strong melodic up-tempo stuff à la poppier TURBONEGRO at times. There is also a bit of GRAHAM PARKER AND THE RUMOUR mixed in—quality names thrown around here with just cause! Whether the songs have loud guitars, piano, or sax, they just seem to work. From Italy, these guys have the best of the '70s down. (RL)
(Area Pirata)

LILITH VELKOR – "Lone" LP

Took me some time to realize I'd actually seen this band before. They toured with SHELLSHAG not too long ago and, lo and behold, are on their label. If NIRVANA is not to your liking you will not be into this LP, simple as that. "Aggroculture," "Foile" and "Blue Mornings" seriously sound like they could be wedged onto *Bleach*. And I wasn't completely convinced that they were actually doing anything new until the song "Summerland" hit, with its stoney drawl à la DINOSAUR JR. "Waiting" is notably different from the rest of the album, perhaps someone else at the helm for vocals, very WIPERS-esque. Maybe a tinge of ARCHERS OF LOAF on "Inky" and at times the twiddle of guitar brings BLONDE REDHEAD to mind. This album brought back some serious nostalgia for me, and although it might not be staking a claim with an original sound, it's just comfortable. Kind of like a flannel shirt you find at your local thrift, the one that resembles the one you used to wear the holy-shit out of when you were a teenager. It might not suit your style now, but it still feels good. (CR)
(Starcleaner)

LOST CHORDS – "And They Will Push You Around" EP

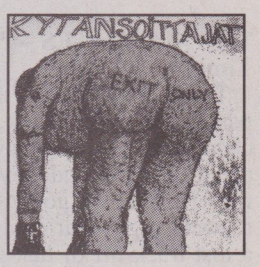
They have one side at 33 rpm and the other at 45—gonna have to pay attention here! "Hate" starts this off great and with a chorus of "I hate you / Die motherfucker," how can you lose? The vocals on this are really Euro puppet show monster sounding, reminiscent of Chris D. from the FLESH EATERS, especially on one song. Combining that band with some early TURBONEGRO singles might give you a comparison. (It's good on the wrong speed, too.) (RO)
(Blast of Silence)

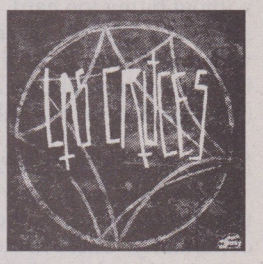
LUCHA ETERNA – "Asceroso" EP

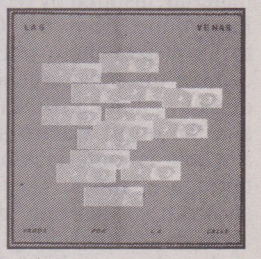
Fast and pissed hardcore from Cleveland, LUCHA ETERNA play with total ferocity. Thrashing shit and maybe even some genuine blastbeats but nothing that pushes the EP into grind territory: any song off of this would be at home on one of the *Histeria* compilations. Cleveland is not an easy town, nor is it known for many Spanish language punk bands, but LUCHA ETERNA are a welcome addition to the historical tradition of Clevo-hardcore that suggests there must be something "special" in the water out there (see the CIDER EP review above). It's probably a unique form of rust, but there's gotta be bile too. The internet seems to say that the band is no more—is this true? I'm betting things got destroyed when they played live. (SZ)
(Saucepan)

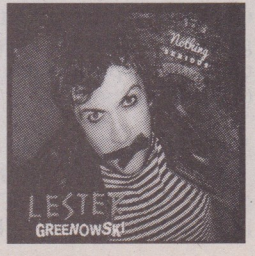
LYCKA TILL – "Rakt Över Munnen" LP

I think this must be the Swedish equivalent of folk punk, which is totally fine by me! More accurately, I'd describe their sound as one part Lookout Records, one part EBBA GRÖN, and one part folk punk in a broader sense. Or maybe it's like MATTIAS ALKBERG meets RVIVR with some trumpet parts thrown in there for good measure. It is very well done and I like that there is an acoustic electric plus an electric guitar, keeping it in the realm of urgent punk rock (and you can tell at least some of them like hardcore). They hail from Umeå, Sweden, home to a totally vibrant punk scene. The band is made up of what seems more like a collective of friends, with perhaps a few fixed members, plus others who occasionally chime in on a variety of instruments, all together forming what they refer to as the LYCKA TILL family. The insert is actually a rad zine with one page dedicated to each song featuring English translations of all their Swedish lyrics. This thing was recorded in 2011 but it looks like they are still active and recently played with CATHARSIS. This record just transmits very good vibes and good politics—I would love to see them live and dance around a bit. (LT)
(Dragabang, no info)









MANATEEES – "Sit N Spin" LP

Fantastic. This is the debut album by Memphis' MANATEEES. It's got the same noisy, dark, ominous feel that their latest singles have had. The music is plodding, but in a way that doesn't leave you bored. The guitars buzz and fuzz while the rhythm section keeps pounding along. Singer Abe's vocals remind me of a cross between JAY REATARD and DAVID NUDELMAN. They are at once panicked and frantic, yet cool and laid-back. The lyrics alternate between simple and fun like "It may seem weird / 'Cause I have a beard" and aggressive and mean. "Cold & Rhythmic" is my favorite song on the album. It is faster and more melodic than most here with something resembling a chorus. Then when I flip the record cover over and I see the picture of the "Fuck You" banner hanging onstage behind the band with their hair all drooped over their eyes, I just have to smile. I love this. (CK)
(Pelican Pow Wow)

THE MANDATES – "Suspicion/Wastin' Time"

These four fuckers from Calgary play party-rock tinged punk, keeping the chord changes to a minimum while singing about pizza and girls, and they *still* haven't pissed me off. That's a good sign. The A-Side is a sweet rager that could have easily been a lost track off of that first NIGHTMARE BOYZZZ 7", and the flip seems like a slight tip of the hat to the RAMONES, without biting too hard. I like this. I want to hear more. I'd see these guys play a show with DANCER and I'd be pretty happy at the end of the night. (DZ)
(Teenage Rampage / Taken by Surprise)

MANLIFTINGBANNER – "Red Fury" LP

A Crucial Response signature makes a triumphant return to the political hardcore community. These Dutch legends attempt to keep their legacy going with this post-discography release of (basically) all-new material, inspired by recent political tumult. Everything from the Occupy movement to Syria sets these tracks off, but not all capture the same urgency or wrath as past output. Although the intent is obvious and the effort was massive, the album as a whole is quite lackluster, difficult to sit through at times. The message is strong; so much so that only devotees would put up with the preaching. The production is slick and songwriting thin. The packaging is insane—one might even say indulgent. When one of hardcore's most notable Communist outfits opts for the colossal gatefold, foldout, glossy treatment I may opt out of repeat listens. (RM)
(Crucial Response)

MEATBODIES – LP

MEATBODIES is the solo project of FUZZ bassist Chad Ubovich. While the inner sleeve claims "all songs written and performed by," it also notes that there are contributions from TY SEGALL, CORY HANSON, ERICK JIMENEZ and RILEY YOUNGDAHL adding bass, drums, synthesizer and drums. Like most others who break out of the TY SEGALL performance circle MEATBODIES' album could easily be mistaken for a SEGALL album. If you're a fan of SEGALL (you know I am) you can't help but like this. The guitars fuzz and the vocals are frenzied with an underlying poppiness. The energy picks up, slows down and then goes wild again. Plus there is simple niceness to this crew. Egomaniacal rock stars don't write lyrics like "All the girls think I'm neat." (CK)
(In the Red)

THE MODERNS – "When She Gets Back" EP

Super sick recently uncovered SoCal punker! "You might make more money / But I get more kicks / And who wants to spend their lives workin' for a prick" and that shit's on the B-Side! These three incredible throwaway classics were lost in a vault for 35 years, and here they are now (featuring pre-MODERN WARFARE members if that gets your drool loose). The A-Side is a charmingly lo-fi power pop burner that'll have you remembering your own dark times with casual abandon. The two songs on the flip reminded me somewhat of the teenage swagger of the A.D.'S classic "Living Downtown," which is to say this record woulda been comp-ed by a dark overlord in Hell, Norway had it been released when recorded…The vocalist reminds me of a mix of a RAMONE and a member of the CROWD, and if the power pop desperation of the A-Side doesn't grab you, the B-Side is snotty enough to take care of all your woes past and present. This isn't a life-changing record, but it is an instant mood stimulant so grab one now as it looks like stocks are running low… (LG)
(Feral Kid / UT)

THE MONSIEURS – LP

If you have fantasies of some kind of mythological '50s and '60s America as colored by B horror movies, detritus of junk culture, and SHANGRI-LAS and STRAY CATS record covers, you may have some kindred souls in the MONSIEURS. This bassless power trio has an entire LP of raw, fuzzy, and occasionally feedback-laden rock'n'roll garage, not without heavy nods to everyone's favorite family band (they even have a song called "Headbanger"). There're a few sugary moments that, along with the singer's voice, remind me of the first NOBUNNY LP. Aside from some rhythmic minimalism (the drummer plays a kit without a kick, hi-hat, ride cymbal, or rack tom), it's pretty drawn-on-the-line garage. True, it's rockin' and noisy, but not excessively so, fitting instead in a comfy middle ground where they might share fans with NOBUNNY, KING KHAN &/or BBQ, and perhaps some noisier acts like CUMSTAIN, DEMON'S CLAWS, or the DIRTBOMBS. (LP)
(Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

NERV – "USA Off Earth Now!" EP

Oh, I'm sorry. You didn't see NERV on their tour earlier this year? Well, punk, that was stupid. NERV is everything that I want from a Midwestern hardcore band: awkward, fierce blasts of irreverent mania that sound like they were assembled by four dudes who joined forces simply because everyone else was the enemy. There's a definite '80s bent, but I think that's more a product of an adolescence unhindered by big city distractions…these punks are pure and fukkn honest. And if there's one thing missing from hardcore today it's honesty. Iowa's NERV rip through whatever the fukk they want. NERV do not care what is cool, because they are doing what they want to do, and when the last 45 seconds of "Homecoming" kick you in the teeth, you'll realize that what they want to do is be one of the best hardcore bands in North America. Fukk the cool kids, this is where it's at. (WN)
(Lagerville)

NEW JUNK CITY – LP

It's funny how a band's geographic location can be so transparent, judged solely and blindly on their music. By the time the second track was half over, it was obvious that these fellows reside somewhere within America's Region Rock Triforce (Athens, Chattanooga, Asheville). A quick internet search revealed they claim Atlanta as home (close enough). I say second song because the first track on this LP (while quite good) is deceptively different from the rest. The record kicks off in full party mode with a scorching track that could be placed in both the ERGS and DESCENDENTS school of pop. But by song two, you are transplanted from the basement to the bedroom with mid-tempo Region Rock that (softly) sinks its teeth into both country twang and emo. Perhaps the term "heartfelt" is a more palatable word to use, as opposed to "emo," but you get the idea. It continues along the course, up 'til the final tune, where we are once again jolted into a high-energy number that uses a THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB guitar tone and blends in nicely with the previous tracks. It's good all the way through—worth checking out. (FS)
(No Breaks)

THE NIMBWITS – "To Punk Or Not To Be" CD

'Tis funny, just as I was about to wax lyrical about the special place German sing-along punk à la SLIME has in my heart, I looked more closely at the sleeve/booklet, and ascertained that these folks are from Denmark. Though, let's be honest,

Denmark butts up against Deutschland über alles so I'm sure the borders are pretty porous influence-wise. Lyrically, they tread the usual street punk fare: lots of songs about drinking, and not liking politicians, and there even seems to be a feminist anthem of sorts. Musically, well, they do have that anthemic Germanic sound down, with a suitable dose of metallic lead guitar, which brings to mind the best of STRUNG OUT (or even early JINGO DE LUNCH, if we're still on the Kraut kick). Regardless this rocks. Comes with a not-as-great bonus disc of some demos—definitely sounds like the best went on the album. (RK)
(Schizophrenic Inc.)

NO FAITH – "Fortress World" EP

More complete life annihilation from Western Mass, NO FAITH deal in harsh, sludged-out powerviolence, bookended by passages of haunting industrial noise. Featuring most of the same membership as VACCINE (still my favorite straightedge band of all time, sorry nerds), their knee-deep pedigree also includes time in SQRM, ORCHID, AMPERE, and RELICS along with countless others. Some referents from the powerviolence world would include, well, VACCINE, or at times perhaps a totally scummed-out IRON LUNG, but there's an oozing quality to the production that puts this in a whole other world of sonic nastiness. Lots of MOSS-worthy amplifier worship for those of you who know how to get down, revisiting some of the same territory explored in vocalist Will Killingsworth's drone/doom solo project the TOLL. The noise segments are fantastic on their own terms and complement the music perfectly, never once feeling like an add-on or afterthought. Honestly, this is just the best shit. (WB)
(Clean Plate / Vendetta)

THE NO MARKS – "Light of One" LP

Although I wouldn't call this rip-off material, this would definitely go over well with fans of HOT WATER MUSIC and LEATHERFACE, Fest attendees, and that dude with his shirt off holding the PBR. I could generalize this as gruff dude rock, but there are some pretty sweet backups hitting an angelic higher register every now and again. The vinyl comes in red, white and blue vomit spew splatter, and I know this sounds stupid, but that kick drum sounds *so killer*. There are a few cool tracks—I'd go see these guys play at some weird bar and maybe buy them a shitty beer. They seem like nice motherfuckers. (DZ)
(Brassneck)

NOTS – "We Are Nots" LP

Imagine the main characters from the Czech new wave movie *Daisies* hearing ELECTRIC EELS and forming a band...In a musical landscape soiled by disappointment and boredom NOTS transcend our turgid times with malignant ease and snotty grace. *We Are Nots* is a burning coal of wild discontent, a document of uncontainable youth fueled by anarchic kicks. There is something both playful and dangerous about the vicious attack contained within; the lyrics read like maniac brat girl Burroughs cut-ups while the music is an automat of Dada punk incisions. The addition of a synth to the group evokes the desolate genius of LOST SOUNDS—perhaps they comes to mind because of the Memphis connection, but there's something in the total intensity and fearlessness with which NOTS mutate the post-punk/new wave sound to match their own needs and ideals. Picture something between the TYRADES and the FALL, then it all goes black; NOTS veer off the straight'n'complacent into art punk auto-destruction territories...Maybe we can all move there and have our own dystopian community! Shards of monotone guitars, violent science-fiction synth lines and the most savage rhythm section all out to undermine your sense of purpose and self. Every song is a hit, an urgent missive, and an inside joke. I was initially worried about the possibility of an LP after two near perfect 45s of KLEENEX / URINALS destruction sounds. Plagued by myriad useless thought wormholes—can you expand on genius all the way to long player form without diluting it?! Well, *We Are Nots* provides all the answers as well as all of the questions. It's impossible to pick a favorite song, you gotta play this disc 69 times in a row. (LG)
(Goner)

ORCHID – "Totality" LP

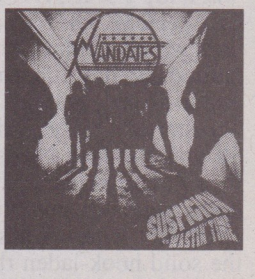
Legendary emotional hardcore band ORCHID put together a must-own collection of tracks from their various 7"s and splits over the years. ORCHID are masters of fitting a lot of music in a short span, constructing the sonic breadth that made them so respected in the screamo realm. Fans of PG. 99 and CITY OF CATERPILLAR probably already know ORCHID but if not, this release is all rare B-Sides and small press tracks, a solid display of their repertoire. The packaging is terrific, and the 7" mini-book with a page dedicated to each song's lyrics, each with a different layout, makes this one to behold. Reviewer dreams do come true, I am probably 20 listens in and still enamored. Brace yourself for some of the fastest four-counts you've ever heard and fall deep in to the brutal melodic frenzy. (DV)
(Clean Plate)

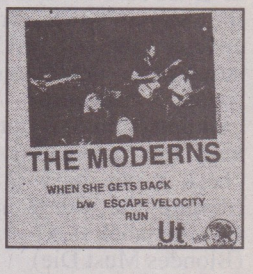
ORGY OF ONE – CD

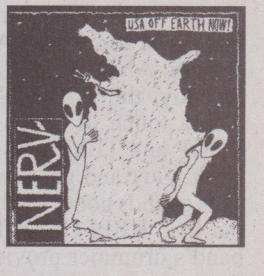
This is very straightforward punk: it's fast and the vocals are clear and melodic, like a sped up AVENGERS. This cheesy recording is kind of bumming me out. There's nothing awful about this (except for the one track "Get Up And Boogie") but also nothing special either. (MM)
(Carnus, no info)

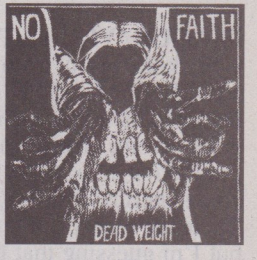
THE PANIC BEATS – "A Date with Death" CD

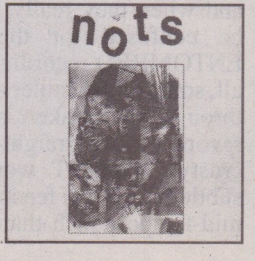
P.O.S. [Piece of Shit] CD that wafted my way. The PANIC BEATS is "torture porn" to the tune of the most adolescent and impotent pop punk. Cartoon cover art of a hooded man, a bloody blade behind his back, offering a bouquet of flowers to his horrified *but* still buxom, doe-eyed victim...*Date with Death* smear-written in blood, with zombies and blood, etcetera, etcetera. I'm not even sure how to categorize this particular pop culture genre, since I avoid it like the plague: misogynist, zombie-loving bros? Unbearable, privileged man-children? Yes, that too. Lyrics like "They're shot on video / Each moment caught on film / Every ah! And every no! / Reminds me of each of them / And what I'm gonna do to you," and song titles like "Stalker," "Do What I Say," "Kill You Anyway," and "Bury Them Deep"—clever, right? But don't worry; there is plenty of blame to go around. PANIC BEATS is a husband-wife combo.











Bros know no gender bounds. This couple's love of the sadism and voyeuristic violence against women as entertainment *and* pop punk is a match made in heaven, 'cause hell would tell them to get the fuck out. Fuck. Off. (CR)
(Midnight Jamboree)

PELUQUERÍA CANINA – "Cerebros" EP

Hailing from Madrid, PELUQUERÍA CANINA features members of LAS VENAS, JUANITA Y LOS FEOS, and PHANTOM KEYS, among others, and that would explain why this is so well-crafted and fun! It's where melodic, dancey guitar-driven garage rock meets snotty, undistorted, pissy punk and the result is all your rat-face needs to get into a great mood! The vocalist sounds like an angry dog, yapping and ticked-off, recalling LARSEN with his nasally swagger, while the solid hook-laden rhythm section keeps my head bopping and my feet tapping. It's as if ESCROTO DE RATA jammed with the SUBSONICS, or if ESKORBUTO covered the BUZZCOCKS. The song structures, production and intricacies (poppy "ouououh" vocals, theatrical cackling, tremolo guitars, glowing solos) keep this stimulating and I suggest you check it out, because Blondes Must Die (despite the weird name) is your new favorite label. (LA)
(Blondes Must Die)

PETS – "Get Turned On" CD

This Sacramento band does the UK C86 thing à la the SHOP ASSISTANTS, early JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, or more recently the RAVEONETTES. There is also a touch of psych leanings similar to LOOP and TEMPLES on the bonus demo track. Guy and gal lead vocals in the mix. This sounds good. I will have to check them out live. KEPI GHOULIE and his backing band's drummer provide the drumming on this by the way. (RL)
(self-released)

PLAGUE / VIOLENT GORGE – split LP

Fucking grind from fucking Winnipeg. VIOLENT GORGE sound like they recorded their side in the middle of a séance gone wrong, launching shit-fi mincecore production into some black metal worthy atmospherics with hollow, hissing vocals. There are plenty of blastbeats to go around, but I'm guessing that these guys have also spent some serious time with *In Battle There is No Law*-era BOLT THROWER, and when they really slow down it might be confused for the sickest, drunkest ENTOMBED recording ever found. All in all, some of the cooler sounds I've had ooze through my speakers as of late. PLAGUE favors a more straight-ahead take on their crusty DISRUPT worship, with a nice, subtle layering of feedback along with more mid-tempo punch than you'd expect from a grind band. Both sides were recorded by Dan from ARCHAGATHUS, who also apparently threw down some vocals for PLAGUE. (WB)
(Aggressive Valley / Filth Regime / Grindfather / Mass Deadening / Uneasy Listening)

POISON GIRLS – "Chappaquiddick Bridge" LP

Here's a reissue of the first POISON GIRLS LP from 1980. For those not familiar, you can expect bleak, experimental anarcho post-punk with directly political songs tackling sexism, sexuality, power, etc. In this era of detached ennui, *Vice*, not giving a fuck about anything, "maybe they're sketchy" DEATH IN JUNE/ ironic SKREWDRIVER worship, etc., it's easy to forget that punk used to be about something. POISON GIRLS and the scene that coalesced around CRASS were deadly serious about changing the system, and they actually did have a positive impact that is still being felt 35 years later. This reissue includes the one-sided 7" that was originally included as a flexi, but is now on regular vinyl. (AM)
(Water Wing)

PYRAMIDO – "Saga" LP

If you're a fan of Yuri Yorstein's *Hedgehog in the Fog*, then this album's cover art should be displayed upon your mantle. There's a bear, an otter, a pheasant, a honey badger…everyone's here, sitting together around the fire in the darkness of the night woods. It's the best cover ever, if I'm judging by early ULVER cover art standards. If you're also a fan of slow, clobbering, tranquilized doom, then give this a try. Self-contained, it seems to distance itself from the listener. There is no ignoring the very strict methodology of PYRAMIDO as music makers, yet I am still carried away by their sludgy undertones. Luckily. What are you doing there on the hi-hat? More of that please. On Side B there's a surprise—all of a sudden we are heavily trolling down GOBLIN lane, and I like it. This is what made EBOLA incredible, an interspersing of style and era. I just wish this would let go a bit more for a recording with so vast a sonic landscape. (JR)
(Punk Distro)

RAJOITUS / RATSTAB – split EP

RAJOITUS' *Hardcore Attack '95* 12" is in my top ten favorite Swedish hardcore releases of all time, so naturally I was very curious to hear the new model version of the band featured on this split. While these tracks don't manage to recapture the lightning in a bottle of that release, they're definitely worth a listen. Lacking the maniacal urgency that characterized their earlier stuff, they're still driving and heavy as hell, picking up steam as the side progresses until they're absolutely blazing through the closer "Raiskattu Ja Ristiinnaulittu." If you're into classic style Swedish hardcore with a dash of crust, this will definitely float your boat. Dunno what RATSTAB are doing on this split except taking up a side that could have gone to a better band. Jokey, crusty grind of no particular distinction. If you think of it as a one-sided EP, this is a pretty good record. (AU)
(Patac / Reality Is A Cult / Riotous Outburst)

RAKTA – "Tudo Que É Sólido/ Serpente"

Sometimes it gets boring watching punks recycle the same ye olde sounds from ancient eras, offering little to no current perspective, just a phony display of what once was for the age of pocket computers. It seems like nothing is possible, that we're just stuck in an endless loop of pathetic rerun culture… then someone does something, it might not be a brand new sound, it might not be a novel reinvention that will transform all our existences, but it's enough to renew your faith in what could be…RAKTA's LP was easily one of last year's best, a total, tense claustrophobic cacophony backed up by incredible art; I was blown away and so excited that they would be touring this coast in 2014. They destroyed San Francisco, putting forth a sound that somehow made you want to dance, but that was also foreboding, menacing and total. No spaces, just layers upon layers of dark noise, with the sickest rhythm section and the wildest guitar sound and vocal tricks. This record is a refreshing shift from their incredible LP. There's a foreboding sense of space on both tracks, giving their sound a feeling of freedom, where the LP was almost unbearably layered with sound upon sound. It's still reminiscent of the dark post-punk dreams of early '80s youth. The B-Side is sick with a dub-like sense of space—this 45 isn't just a deathrock roleplaying game. The A-Side has this cool noir slant with slices of sound appearing out of the depths, deconstructed new wave darkened with an elegant art damaged snarl…This is a double A-Sided 45 in my eyes, each song perfectly complements the other. It sounds like something that could have come out on Rough Trade *or* Factory in 1981, and I for one am fucking psyched this is a now sound. The artwork again is incredible, obviously, making this an essential 2014 single. These women are the future and the past and you best watch where they're going because if their first two records are anything to go by it's only going to get sicker… (LG)
(540 / Dama Da Noite, no info / Nada Nada / La Vida Es Un Mus)

REAL NUMBERS – "What Was and What Is" CD

A collection of this ramshackle group's vinyl output in one easy capsule—made for a drive down to the beach or at least out of the

doldrums. Falling delightfully somewhere within the casual, charming pop sensibility of the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, while also reminiscent of some of the rowdier proponents of the C86 underground in places—I think it's the guitar sound? So catchy and cool, makes me wanna grab my anorak and desert boots and make a new band… It's got the goofiest bedroom teenage dream sound, not as wild as the SWELL MAPS, but anything that instantly gives you warm DAN TREACY tribute feelings is worth saluting! Really does sound like a tape that coulda come with *Are You Scared to Get Happy?* Sloppy, adventurous pop music with a mod punk sensibility! (LG)
(Almost Ready)

THE REBEL SPELL – "Last Run" CD

Indie-alt, whiny-man-vocals over guitar-heavy pop punk and a very slick PR one-sheet that tells us that the REBEL SPELL "shared the stage with punk legends such as BAD RELIGION, SNFU, DOA, PROPAGANDHI, and RANCID." My husband thinks the best part of the CD art is the shriveled penis. So there you have it. (CR)
(Rebel Time)

RECREANT – "Still Burn" LP

Before I listened to this record, I took out the lyric sheet and read through what they had to say. The lyrical content ranges from songs about rape culture ("United States of Steubenville") to tracks about body dysphoria ("Skin"), as they mention in the "disclaimer" to the lyrics on the back of the insert. This is a perfect example of letting your creative endeavors speak for themselves. Always let the music speak for itself. Any intelligent human being with any shred of empathy will relate to what the vocalist is saying. It's common sense. When I read "A society in which rape is followed by a laugh track / An industry that shames the very behavior it encourages" I was deeply moved. The lyrics on this record are very real, very forward, without being preachy and incredibly open. Easily the best part of this record. The music however…I've only ever heard two punk bands with a violin before. One was OROKU (and they actually had a cello) and I feel like, if they haven't played live together, they should. This record is the flunky younger sibling of '90's stadium crust acts like FROM ASHES RISE, replete with emotionally screamed lyrics, oddly placed minor chords, and arpeggiated strumming. Arena Crust is definitely the best term to describe it. The violin reminds me of WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY. I also feel like these folks recorded this record on a pirate ship. I don't think gout still exists, but if it does, this would be the soundtrack for when they saw your leg off. Everything about the riffs (or lack thereof) screams, "I wish I played with HIS HERO IS GONE in '97." Look, this stuff totally has a scene and this record is worthwhile just for the lyrics, I just wish they turned the sea-shanty attitude down to zero. (MW)
(All We Know / Dingleberry, no info / Halo of Flies / IFB / Monday Morning)

REV. NORB AND THE ONIONS – LP

No sermons on this ONIONS LP. It's no fluff and all business (sort of). The Rev. still keeps things weird though, so no worries, with his plucky rapid-fire singing, and goofy lyrics and song titles. It's similar to his BORIS THE SPRINKLER style (BUZZCOCKS, CRAMPS, STOOGES), but a bit more MUMMIES, and rock'n'roll-RAMONES-y. "Teenage Tantrum" has some notably sweet guitar licks and "Oddy Knocky" has some superb retro keyboard that hearkens to B-52's. "She's a Stain" is straight rippin', and "Where Zombies Chill" is rock'n'roll for weirdos (think RAMONES meets "Monster Mash") that pretty much turns into a whirlwind balls-out jam that goes on and on for six-plus minutes. Most songs stay at a sweet two-minute mark, so the less notable songs breeze by. Perfect for your drunken quixotic moods. (CR)
(Certified PR)

RITUAL MESS – "Vile Art" LP

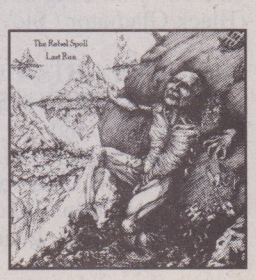
RITUAL MESS is uncompromising hardcore reminiscent of the late '90s, meaning pre-"scream"/post-hardcore passion without all the technical enhancements. Musically, *Vile Art* is a frenzy of intense circular pattern hardcore, gasping screams that trail off into spoken punctuations combined with melancholy melody and dissonant punches tightly executed at a blistering pace. This is the kind of post-hardcore where if you don't get your ass in gear it can get really dull and tiresome. RITUAL MESS brings it full force, recalling FOUR HUNDRED YEARS at their absolute heaviest moments, and delivering charged chaos like the genius of SWING KIDS or BORN AGAINST at their hardest. Some heavy bass breakdowns on Side B really enhance this attack. The lyrics seem to be a conversation with loves and enemies alike. *Vile Art* is straightforward and relatable, while remaining poetic and ethereal. From the minds of ex-ORCHID. (JR)
(Adagio 830 / Clean Plate)

SCALPED – "At A Cross" EP

I almost never mention ex-member status, but SCALPED shares personnel with YADOKAI, CAGED ANIMAL, and Jeremy from CONDITION, SANCTUM and many others, and all of these are audible in their sound. Jake Dudley is a riff-writing powerhouse for pretty much any style he's playing, and he does not fall short here. The fast parts are melodic yet abrasive, frenzied riffing that often takes unexpected turns or changeups, followed by giant, crushing, often drawn-out mosh breakdowns that are far more nuanced than normal, and transcend comparisons to youth crew or modern hardcore, all with a vocalist who sounds like he's chasing you while breathing fire. The recording is huge, and fully brings out the power of these songs. There is a reason that people go nuts every time they play. (DG)
(Warthog Speak)

SEX DRIVE – LP

First off, for whatever reason, the second side of this record is far better than the first, and would have made a better 7" with the more or less disposable A-Side getting scrapped. This band plays straightforward hardcore that's decent, if nondescript, with outraged vocals that are a tad on the goofy side, and some decent-to-great riffs that are mostly either pissed or morose in tone. Most of the record is fast, but some of the songs slow down with hit-or-miss results, and sometimes with Swedish-style melody. If the band had played just a little more tightly, and had gotten a less flat recording—especially for a 12"



45—I feel like the good songs would be more compelling, but as they are, it doesn't warrant repeat listens. And despite being on Crucial Response, this is only vaguely straightedge sounding. (DG)
(Crucial Response)

SEX RAYS – "Midnight Caller/Where's The Tambourine?"

This one's for all you turkeys out there who go gaga for organ-driven garage. While I'm sure these SEX RAYS tear up whatever Midwestern booze lodge they're playing at on any given night, this 45 features two pretty tame rave-ups that sound way too safe and clean for me to sign off on. What can I say? More filth would be nice. (MC)
(Piñata)

SHARKPACT – "Run" LP

This band consists of only a keyboard player and a drummer and given that information, if I had never seen or heard this band in the past, I would probably be skipping over this record. But you should give it a few listens because it's good. It's really good. Both members seem to be on a mind-meld from playing together for such a long time and that really shines through here. They play straight-ahead melodic punk that is tempered by that northwestern vibe of having to live through nine months of rain every year. Some of the band's vocal melodies have a little of the same feel as RVIVR, but that could also be because they share the same town, studio, social circle, and kitchens. Truthfully, those comparisons end there. SHARKPACT has more twists and turns than their neighbors. The keyboard plays with a low end that sounds so good and almost every song manages to be an unstoppable anthem. This is your new rainy day LP. (GH)
(Ditches / Starcleaner / Rumbletowne)

SICK THOUGHTS – "Fat Kid With A 10 Inch" 10"

Wow, the reviewer gods have been smiling on me this month—this one's killer '81 style KBD dumb punk/pre-hardcore. Aggh, fuck. What dipshits! This is great. Makes me think of Aussie punk classics or the better rough punk '77 UK bands but these dopes are from Baltimore circa 2014. Great thugged-out heavy recording, but not in the dogshit rock club compressed garbage way. Just fuckin' good and rough. Cannot believe this is so good—eight tracks on a 10" with a big hole. Morons. (GB)
(Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

SICK THOUGHTS – "Moral Sickness" EP

SICK THOUGHTS plays simplistic pogo punk songs in the same vein as New York bands SAD BOYS or maybe CRAZY SPIRIT. As opposed to the former, the compositions and riffs are archly rudimentary and generic. As compared to the latter, they lack a certain palpable grossness that lent those CRAZY SPIRIT recordings their appeal. Lastly, both of the aforementioned bands have a strong design sense that made their records look like *their* records. In contrast, the cover of this SICK THOUGHTS 7" is the most generically "punk" record I have beheld in a while. There are Schutzstaffel SS, a hammer and sickle, a hand with a switchblade, a blurry image of a dead body, broken bottles…I guess what I'm trying to say is this is the most generic punk record I can remember ever interfacing with. Nothing about it, music or design-wise (or in terms of the raw recording, for that matter), represents any serious original thought. It's like something a couple of young white music ethnocologists would produce for a class wherein they had to demonstrate their study of some musical niche culture. This seems more interested in the act of pastiche than in art, an excellent example when it comes to talking about the difference between art and artifice. True, it's not bad, and it's not mocking, but it's got no verve, soul, or even a sense of real love for this kind of stuff that I can pick up on. If you find this little record spinning in front of you, you probably won't be offended, but you may also notice that this wheel doesn't seem to be rolling anywhere. (LP)
(Blast of Silence)

SICK THOUGHTS – "Terminal Teenage" LP

I reviewed another record by this band not knowing anything about it and enjoyed it immensely. I've since found out this is some kind of outlet for a teenage/child prodigy along the lines of JUSTIN BEAVER or JAY REATARD. Hopefully he'll live longer than the latter and enjoy the fame and drugs of both. Super trashed-out production that gets dull sometimes if you've listened to years of lo-fi slop, but the songs are there. At moments they could be compared to the early REATARDS stuff combined with GG ALLIN, WIRE, and Australia's X among others. This kid adopts a mock accent to belt out anthems like "Peaked in High School" and "My Brain Is A Mess," creating the effects of some new high school drug made from piss, cough syrup, and battery acid. Lovely. (RO)
(Dead Beat)

SIR DEJA DOOG – "Sir Deja Doog's Love Coffin" LP

Longing for a deviant, acid-garage send-up of "The Monster Mash"? Look no further than this LP. This Indiana creep's dedication to the vibe here is downright insane. DOOG vocally vamps over a wicked brew of psych, eerie garage, and jazz, resulting in something creepy, dangerously stoned and oddly inspiring. I'm hesitant to tag it as a novelty record, as there's clearly brains and blood bumping behind this, but I'd probably resign this LP to an annual Halloween spin or two. Features appearances from APACHE DROPOUT dudes. (MC)
(Marching Sunn)

SLANG – "Devastation in the Void" CD

To the surprise of absolutely no one, the latest offering from Sapporo City masters SLANG is a goddamned *beast*, boasting eleven tracks of hardcore fury that uphold the standard set on past efforts like *The Immortal Sin* and *Life Made Me Hardcore*. The usual SLANG MO is intact, with Ko's unmistakable snarl and a focus on vigor and power over speed or technical insanity. If anything, they've actually dialed down the metallic tendencies of recent years, relying on whips of razor-sharp distortion to satisfy the noize crusaders along with their trademark touch of chunky, slamming mid-tempo hardcore. Very glad to see this version includes lyrics in English; even in translation their ruminations on the horrors of our suffering modern world carry a serious impact. Just how few bands can even make it to a seventh full-length, let alone turn in an effort as strong as this, sixteen years into their existence? Unreal. (WB)
(Cleopatra)

SLANT 6 – "Soda Pop*Rip Off" LP

In the flurry of attention that has surrounded the reissue of this record, I feel the need to once again remind you, dear reader, that, no, not all women sound the same. Despite being birthed in '90s DC, this is not a Riot Grrrl band, and to conflate gender/genre as a result of time and place is to do this incredible record a deep disservice. It's 2014, do I still have to write this shit? SLANT 6 is the greatest power trio since the WIPERS, a band that they often looked towards. The sound is spare and incisive, blunt and to the point. Economical like WIRE, most songs do without choruses, opting instead for hook after indelible hook, the melodic sensibilities of the GORIES and their garage ilk meeting the deconstruction of the band's post-hardcore contemporaries in DC. Christina Billotte started her musical career on bass in AUTOCLAVE before switching to guitar here and you can tell—full chords sound almost out of place in the context of her Silvertone's sinewy, surfy riffs. These songs are fast and seething, subtly threatening; tightly coiled, they cut like a knife. Remastered and back in print on vinyl for the first time in decades, this is an absolutely essential record, the sounds of girl genius and possibility. Who's gonna start a band with me? (GA)
(Dischord)

SLEDGEBACK – "Land of the Freak" CD

This is some kind of tuff guy punk from Seattle (former members of which went on to play in QUEENSRYCHE) playing fast, melodic Fat Wreck-style songs, with nods to the unkind era of BAD RELIGION and SOCIAL DISTORTION. There are sound bites of someone saying "fuck you," "fuck off," or "fuck it" before many of the tracks—it's not endearing. I really like the vocals though. The singer is Hungarian and has a really cool accent and the vocals sound like they are double tracked, which is normally an instant turn off for me, but I think his voice sounds awesome. Ooh! There's a song about fighting cops! Oh, fuck, it's from the perspective of soccer hooligans. This is a little too polished, and a little too heavy on the tough guy side for me. If you like those bands that go on that tour sponsored by that skate shoe, who all do synchronized high jumps and have chain wallets, this might be just what you were looking for fifteen years ago. (DZ)
(Blank TV / Sliver)

SLUG – "Detect Denounce Destroy" CD

Anarcho-punk for those rowdy fucks who always preferred CONFLICT over CRASS, these high energy punk rock'n'roll songs are about hatin' the state, class war, animal liberation, anti-war, and cissexism. Plenty of raspy vocals, guitar solos and sloganeering to get you stoked about beating up those cops later tonight. (AP)
(A World We Never Make)

SO COW – "The Long Con" LP

This band's been around for longer than five minutes and they've put out a few LPs. While this is their first as a trio, it still sounds like frontman Brian Kelly is running the show. Some guy from DEERHOOF produced it, if you care about that kind of thing, and I guess this is the band's first visit to a "proper" studio and it sounds pretty slick. A lot of people say this band sounds like the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, which is definitely true, but on this LP, they add in nods to some bouncy ELVIS COSTELLO jams and even a few songs that sound like they could've been cut from PAVEMENT albums. The most interesting parts occur when the band fucks up the typical structures of their pop songs, adding in some noise and feedback to break up the flow. Unfortunately, they then use those opportunities to kinda jam out some bad guitar solos. And then sing about being a sad sack. This is a catchy, hook-laden record, but it sounds slick and sterile the majority of the time…like it was primed to be the theme to a car commercial. Maybe you like car commercials? Also, because we're a punk magazine, this record is not punk. It's indie rock. Still, it's pretty good. (GH)
(Goner)

SO SLOW – "777/Noyon"

Here's another installment of Antena Krzyku Singles Club, this time in the form of some crazy post-hardcore from Poland. "777" has spastic and off-kilter qualities that make me think of nu metal, but the weird synthy sounds on the second bridge part tickle me in a good way. The flip side shows SO SLOW living up to their name. The drummer turns his snares off to blend in with the tom work, and the ambience is nice, but I'm gonna move on to something with a bit more urgency. (MA)
(Antena Krzyku)

SOUL SIDE – "Trigger/Bass-103" LP

Dischord has settled nicely into a reissue focused label. This record features Soul Side's 1988 LP *Trigger* as well as the follow up 7" single *Bass 103*. The mastering is clean and captures the noisy power of that classic DC '80s post-hardcore sound. Obvious similarities for fans of FUGAZI. The bassline opening "Name in Mind" sets up the scratchy distorted melodies that grow in to a more catchy pop inspired howling close, more reminiscent of late '80s East Bay pop punk. There is a solid balance between the dissonance and the hooks that makes the songs memorable and anthemic. (DV)
(Dischord)

SOUPCANS – "Parasite Brain" EP

Very freaky, noise-laden garage punk, self-described as "Cronenberg Punk"—a very appropriate moniker thanks to the heavy OKIE DOKIE influence. Most of the songs are frantic and upbeat except for "Crimes of the Future, Pt. II," which takes up almost half of this six-song EP. Not that that's a bad thing—most bands of this genre have one long *The Process of Weeding Out* song to separate the poseurs from the true noisy freaks. If you're a fan of artwork featuring tentacles, nonsensical biographies, music videos with that Mac disappearing background Photobooth effect, mental anguish, and rolling around on the floor, and you think that PISSED JEANS are too mainstream now, then SOUPCANS is the band for you. (KC)
(JKSHK / Telephone Explosion)

SSEEPAGE – "Depelted Sseepage" LP

It's difficult to release a record by a band that hasn't been active for eight or so years, especially if the band was never particularly popular, but I understand the feeling of wanting to see certain music have a life on vinyl, no matter what. This late LP by the Chicago-based SSEEPAGE is definitely a labor of love looking to find its audience. They play noise-tinged hardcore and weirdness that has some of the same lo-fi manic energy of bands like FAT DAY and JACKWACKER. Some songs are full blasts of skronky noise with unrelenting drumming and full-on screaming, while others enter a repetitive groove while the singer goes off on his own tangent. What really makes this work for me is the truly unhinged singing, covering each song in a blanket of anxious, fucked up discomfort. This one is definitely challenging and laden in feedback, but it's also a fucking great record. Track it down. It features former and current members of END OF THE CENTURY PARTY, VERTONEN, TV POW, NO STATIK, REPLICA, and JUD JUD. (GH)
(Coaxt)

SUBURBAN FILTH – "Total Thrash Punk Music" EP

Let's talk briefly about the etymology of the word thrash. Before metal was really a thing, at least in the specific sense that there was "thrash metal," thrash was a word that record reviewers used to indicated that the music in question was A) fast and B) sloppy (read: without musical merit). CHAOS UK was thrash, DISORDER was thrash, and SUBURBAN FILTH was defiantly and uncompromisingly *thrash*. Proudly proclaiming that "each member has had no music lessons at all" (and boy does it show!) these

20 (!) tracks culled from a primo front room of the drummer's mum's house recording session in 1982 showcase a band that literally could not be more fucking punk. Ranging from fairly well-arranged short shocks of hardcore to meandering, seemingly improvised bursts of bullshit that can barely be called a song, this record has something for absolutely everyone. As an added bonus, the amazing insert compiles several painfully sincere fanzine interviews and all the lyrics. I can't stress enough how much I love this record and how glad I am that somebody put the time and effort into putting these songs on wax. Cheers to Quedge, Phil, Gord, and Rut, wherever you are now. You were punk as fuck. "Proud to be shit at music," indeed. (AU)
(True Punx of Libya, no info)

SWEET EMPIRE – "Old Ideas Keep Fighting Us" CD

This Amsterdam gaggle of goofs is kind of endearing. Underneath the formulaic (read: fast and chunky melodic punk with a sweet solo right after the pickslide) hooks, these kids seem like sweet nerds who just like playing music together. I wouldn't say it's my cup of tea, but this is for fans of pop punk, the heavier side of Plan-It-X, anyone who liked that band called 3, people who are nerd-identified, and sweet vegan crybabies who hate the military. In case you think I am on a roll with my dissing, I just described myself in about thirty words. (DZ)
(Laser Life / Gunner / Shield)

SWINGIN' UTTERS – "Fistful of Hollow" LP

This is an incredibly pleasant surprise. If the UTTERS of old looked to the UK circa '82 for that classic street punk sound (and then a decade later for the Irish/folk/roots thang), on this record they've reached four or five years further back, to the UK in '78 or so for a completely different starting point. Think BUZZCOCKS (or the poppier numbers), EATER and the DRONES (for the punker efforts), and WIRE (for the more experimental), all with a very clean guitar sound. And it *really* works—their finest effort to date, in my humble opinion. No folky stylings to speak of at all, and only one semi-acoustic track. Really rather excellent. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

TEENANGER – "EP LP" LP

This sounds like some sneering, snotty Calvin Johnson superfan stole the guitarist and bassist from RED MONKEY and an old lyric sheet from Todd Congelliere, and tried to make some super dancey garage pop—and I really like it. It's dancey, trippy, quirky and repetitive, and the lyrics don't really seem as important as the melody. The last song or two venture a little too far into indie rock territory, but all in all this is a solid record! This is going to make all the haters dance like maniacs and I want to be there to see it. (DZ)
(Telephone Explosion)

TOTAL CONTROL – "Typical System" LP

Writing about this record is impossible. You probably already have a copy—apparently 8,000 people downloaded these sounds from a single link this summer when nerves got too frayed because of pressing plant delays. Do you want new wave or do you want the truth? Me neither...It was a disconcerting listen at first because of the total adoration felt towards *Henge Beat*, but then the more plays this got the more eternal it sounded.

"The Sound of Fear in the Western World," *Vintage Violence*, Berlin ENO/motorik collisions with late-era BLITZ. This is a fucking classic, like reading Phillip K. Dick on a commuter train in end times capitalist reality; it feels nostalgic and current at the same time. Forever prescient, ironic, but also true enough that it stays with you through these tiresome times. For many reading this, *Typical System* is not going to be "punk" enough, whatever that means, but I can't stop listening to it. It feels both personal and subversive, romantic and dispassionate. My first sentence rings too true. (LG)
(Iron Lung)

THE UKIAH DRAG – "In the Reaper's Quarters" LP

While they may not be from Northern California, the UKIAH DRAG definitely live up to the latter half of their name. The A-Side of their new LP mines some wailing psych jam rock with some tragically over-the-top vocals, at times bordering on some real whitey blues riffing. It reminds me mostly of the BLACK LIPS or something that Jack White would be excited about circa the last WHITE STRIPES record. They also start off with a whole retro "Dangers of Sin" style spooky vibe that carries on for most of the rest of the record. The fake preacher intro just ruins it for me. The B-Side departs a little from that stylistically, with a cover of a twangy Lee Hazelwood ballad with embarrassing lyrics and a death rocky number, but keeps the haunted house vibe. For fans of extended wah pedal solos. (LP)
(Wharf Cat)

URBANOIA – "Psykisk Terror" EP

How come punks in Europe are cooler than punks in the good ol' USA? I mean, shit, we invented freedom, the McDouble, and the Second Amendment. We should get some cool points, right? But, alas, no bueno, USA. The style on this EP, man, the style! *Psykisk Terror*, first and foremost, is an arrogant record, effortlessly cool as it transitions between a more pogo-ish '77 vibe and a less complicated SICK PLEASURE. The attitude is definitely American in a lot of respects. Defiant and nihilistic but mixed with a European sensibility, akin to AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ. This is an example of where simple *is* better and it seems like a lot of Scandinavian bands have perfected this attitude. Snotty, virulent and loose. I also hear a lot of FY FAN. There's a certain back-and-forth the guitar is doing that seems to be a nod at D-beat without all the attitude. All in all, an amazing second EP. For fans of: warehouse shows, snow, living in the boonies. (MW)
(D-Takt & Råpunk / Solar Funeral)

USELESS EATERS – "Bleeding Moon" LP

Bleeding Moon shows that USELESS EATERS (and in large part, their main brainiac, Seth Sutton) haven't stopped moving forward. In fact, it sounds like they've been honing their shit 'til it turns to gold. If we're to measure their success by how tightly wound they can come off, then this new LP is a major victory. While the expected short, extremely sharp shards of well-crafted punk are all over this new album, it's the psych-punk of the title track that's the most striking. It all makes for a very tense listen, comparable to WIRE or a moody *KBD* heavyweight in its economy and itchiness. This LP just feels like the front-to-back winner they've been itching toward all along, and it's a total pleasure to hear. (MC)
(Castle Face)

LAS VENAS – "Vamos Por la Calle" EP

I'm feeling a little out of the loop wondering why I haven't heard of this zestful and stripped down punk band from Madrid yet. I think this is their first release though, so I guess I'm doing okay. On these four tracks the sound definitely recalls the playfulness of the 1980s Madrid punk and new wave milieu referred to as *La Movida*, particularly LOS NIKIS and also the slightly more underground LARSEN and LA BROMA DE SSATÁN. Their style has however unmistakably passed through the filter of the sped up, undistorted variety of European punk of the last decade, such as that of DEAN DIRG and ÜBER. The lyrics are a little weird and I think there is some subliminal message concealed in the insert, but I haven't been able to figure it out. I'm excited to see what's next for these folks. (LT)
(Blondes Must Die)

VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCE – EP

Wow…this is chaos! Chaos from Buffalo, NY. Former/current members of WATER TORTURE and DEAD WEIGHT. Fast and I mean fast, hardcore. I honestly can't remember the last time I heard a band this fast that wasn't grindcore, powerviolence or thrash and while V.O.C. do grind at times, they are really just a fast hardcore band. Oh sure, the drummer blasts once in a while, but this is hardcore that's noisy,

chaotic, fast and doesn't sit in one place for very long. First the *Bloodstains Across Buffalo* comp and now this release; what's going on up there? Love this one. (MH)
(Nerve Altar)

VOICE OF DOOM – "III" CD

This release is a reissue coupled with new material from a short-lived punk band based out of Bergen County, New Jersey in the mid-eighties. The early material, buried toward the end of the collection, is what we're interested in here. Boasting studio recordings of drummer London May, the two songs the former SAMHAIN member play on are certifiable rippers. The rest of the collection was recently recorded and follows their previous efforts in sound and style, and while these are strong tracks, they're no substitute for the original. The 1987 *Faith is Torn* EP is four fierce, original punk anthems incorporating some of the best elements of early MISFITS tunes, commanding a sound only few can accomplish. A surprise to say the least but hearing "What I See" for the first time is what I do this for. Killer track. (RM)
(Pyrrhic Victory)

VORTIS – "Safety First" CD

This Chicago band has the early '80s US punk thing going on. I guess they have been around awhile, similar to the DEAD MILKMEN or the ZERO BOYS with their kind of snotty but not hardcore sound. This is okay but after repeated listens I'm still not jazzed. Maybe locals will dig this more than me but this is by no means bad. (RL)
(self-released)

WANK FOR PEACE – "Fail Forward" CD

Should I simply write "melodic hardcore punk" as my three-word review? Dammit, I sure wish I could, plenty of chugga chuggas and whoa-ohh-ohhs for all of you heartfelt tough guy types. You know, here at the compound, a lot of people have a lot of negative things to say about pop punk, and I get it, but what I want to know is where's the hate for this genre? Where? Right here, that's where. At their best, they remind me of INQUISITION, or STRIKE ANYWHERE, but maybe it's just the vocals. At their worst, they sound like all the other bands that played this style of anthemic stuff years and years ago. (DZ)
(Guerilla Asso / No Reason / Shield)

WAR//PLAGUE – "Temperaments of War" LP

Well, fuck. How do I put this politely? "No thanks," I guess. This is a nice conceptual release for people that are into this sort of thing. A four-song, 45 rpm LP loosely built around "the philosophy of the Four Humors and how they tie into man's obsession with war." It's metallic crust that you'd expect to be affiliated with Profane Existence (and it is). Nothing remarkable, but if you already like this style I'm sure it'll still sound good enough, I just don't get anything from it and the historical analysis of WWI implicit in "Phlegm" is just awful… like, painfully uninformed even for lyrics utterly drenched with ambiguity. (SZ)
(Organize and Arise)

WAR WOLF – "Crushing the Ways of the Old" LP

Fuck yeah, I'm into this. Eclectic, stoner-y metal that definitely recalls the Bay Area's much-loved BRAINOIL. Equally at home blasting through a black metal-inspired buzzing riff and riding a mid-tempo groove, WAR WOLF have definitely carved out a sound of their own that should resonate with a wide range of punks and metalheads. Well-curated samples are scattered throughout, emphasizing the omnipresent anti-religion theme and extra mega bonus points are due for the well-written lyrics that touch on a range of topics including gay marriage, abortion rights, and white privilege. It's been a long time since I've heard a record like this that really resonated with me—I will be looking for future releases from these cats! (AU)
(Atomsmasher / Headless Guru / Tadpole)

WAR WOLF – " Riding With Demons" 10"

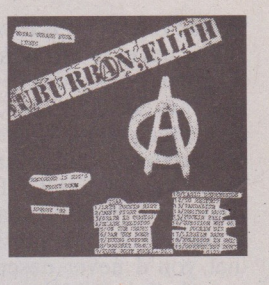
A 2013 debut with eight tracks of bombastic, metallic hardcore'n'sludge from Brighton, UK featuring members of SEA BASTARD and DOPEFIGHT. A red vinyl 45 RPM 10" with thick metallic riffs, the guitar tone is lethal and complemented by a huge open drum pound, before breaking into fast thrash fits. On some of the slow parts, the bellowed vocals recall a few brief seconds of *Sum of the Men*-era MAN IS THE BASTARD, though the recording is much sharper and the overall trappings lean more towards hard rock'n'pro-punk with a Savannah Sludge-style rock groove, mosh breakdown or technical crunch here or there. Despite basically sounding like they've included a laundry list of brutal ingredients, it consistently works and is total modern hardcore bludgeoning. No lyrics, cover has scrawls of a tank, skulls, helicopters, and a pope! (KS)
(Headless Guru)

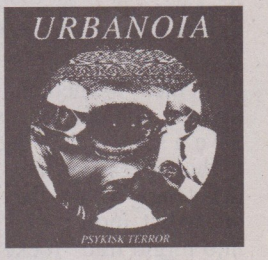
WATER TORTURE – "Pillbox" LP

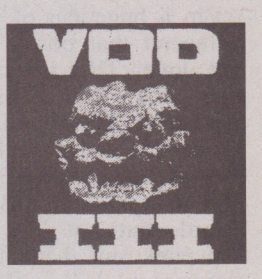
If I say, "two-bass grind with noise," then obviously you think MAN IS THE BASTARD. Wipe that out of your brain—the between song noise bits might bear passing resemblance to some BASTARD NOISE incarnations but that's only because power electronics sounds kinda like…well, power electronics (and those bits of the record are, almost without exception, quite excellent). WATER TORTURE is tortured grinding hardcore that doesn't sound like anyone but WATER TORTURE. *Pillbox* is long for a grind record—seventeen tracks of low-end punishment with clean, shouted vocals occupying the high register all alone. "Creature of Repetition" is the coolest track I've heard all month, and I didn't use the word powerviolence once in this review. (WN)
(Nerve Altar)

WEED HOUNDS – LP

Wounds of this crushing reality sometimes go deep, hiding in far-off places in your psyche. Remedies seem to be far and few between these days. That's where WEED HOUNDS come in, taking equal parts shoegaze and post-punk, mixed with a healthy dose of dream pop. Ethereal overtones are slashed in favor of fuzzy blown-out guitars carrying out jangly sonic walls over gentle vocals, a duality which doesn't always have the best of outcomes elsewhere, but that's not the case here. Lie on your bedroom floor, blast it and dig deep. This is your guiding light. (AP)
(Katorga Works)







WHITE ASS – "Baby Blue" LP

The cover is sort of spazzy and had me a little nervous—I didn't think I was going to like this one. But man, you put the needle on the record and the sounds are golden. It's a little fuzzy with a real heavy rock'n'roll feel, like old STOOGES or the SAINTS. And did I mention that you can hear the influence of folk music, despite the fact that you'd never describe it as such? On top of all that, it's got a real otherworldly, ethereal feel to it, just in case you're looking for texture. Mid-tempo and very catchy, if I told you they were from Paris, you probably wouldn't be all that impressed, but it's true. I think you are really going to like this one. (KK)
(Frantic City)

WIDE HIPS 69 – "Menopause" CD

Whoa! Italian punk ladies made a record that sounds like a punksploitation record from '78! This really does sound like a record made by a salty comedian to mock the antics of punkers—either that or a KIM FOWLEY post-RUNAWAYS production. It's a beer rockin' affair with lyrics mocking love, men, women, the BEATLES, YOKO, drunks, and all the usual suspects. They have a song called "Beer, Tea, and Pussy" if that gives you any perspective…I like the songs where they all just scream at once, but more often than not they veer into turgid trad "rocker" jams, which give this a total tame bar punker feel. In my eyes this is one of the more boring moves punks make, you know? Bar rockin' punk is just not a life-giving force…I bet they are fun to watch, like TURBONEGRO playing "Queens of Noise," but this is too much of the former and not enough of the latter for me, meaning I am not sure I would listen to this more than once. Way too much *rawk*, and not enough punk for this listener. (LG)
(Area Pirata)

YOUNG LADIES – "We Get By" LP

I'm a huge fan of punk rock, but it's no secret that power pop might be my true love. This is power pop. But it's also rock'n'roll. That's an important distinction. The record is easy to listen to, it's catchy, and it's full of nostalgia. And the YOUNG LADIES probably didn't want to hear this from *MRR*, but it's a sweet record—but not like the candy coated pop punk shit that clutters up our radio airwaves these days. (KK)
(No Breaks)

ZERO BOYS – "Monkey" LP

Monkey!? Is this some kind of *Spinal Tap* inside joke? You know like, "Yeah mate, we've been in the studio again. Really. It's a concept album. It's called *Monkey*." Fuck if I know. Well, there's a painting of a monkey on the cover. Until this, Bloomington's finest hadn't released an album in 20 or so years and it probably should have stayed that way. You can just look at the artwork and song titles ("Upload," "Living Library," "Psoi," etc.) and already tell this is going to blow. I guess a band has to mature and can't sing about shooting speed in their eyeballs forever. Mature. Blaaaahh. The songs from their recent seven-inch (that weren't that great) are on here and those are some of the standout tunes. There's a really embarrassing transgender sympathy song called "Sex Change." Other standout winners are the aforementioned "Living Library" and "Squee." Not saying a lot. I don't wanna grow up. (RO)
(self-released)

V/A – "Bay Area Retrograde, Vol. 2 1978-1983" LP

Ugh, this is really what compilations are all about and I am finding it almost impossible to sum it all up in one short review. If New York had SUICIDE, then the Bay had ten times that number of bands, inching away from post-punk, new wave and disco and exploring synth punk, no wave, electro, industrial and dance music—it's the Bay Area's *BIPPP* comp equivalent and it's fucking great! This is the second collection of unique, underground freakoid acts from the Bay Area put out by Dark Entries, this time circa 1978-1983. Every band and track on here is an honest keeper! The packaging is beautiful, with its foldout poster, neon details and minimal aesthetic. "Contains no satanic messages," reads the insert, because there was a time when San Francisco and the Bay Area were vastly different places to what they are now; when areas like the Fillmore and Castro, among others, were hotbeds of seedy activity, sexploitation and experimentation. Weirdo rejects would brush shoulders with artsy thinkers who would get high with performance artists who would share the stage with experimental musicians—it was a creative gang-bang and the results were stellar! No one was *trying* to be edgy or weird or uneasily fringe, they just *were*. The atmosphere is thick with sensation, and the dampness from the smoke-filled basements they dwelled in is palatable. The dark and synthy opening track by sound architects FACTRIX, "Night to Forget," ends with screams and growls, setting the tone for Side A. Following is "Meet You In the Subway" by CHROME and their dancey repetition, rhythmic, space-funk basslines and saxophone meanderings; RED ASPHALT's freak-out, new wave mind-saw; the bleak but poignant beat on TUXEDOMOON's "Day to Day;" the claustrophobic, superbly textured KI DI ME track with its BRIAN ENO-esque bleeps and ominous sound bite. Side B is decisively brighter (like neon-street-lamp-at-night bright) and again drum machines, Moogs, and Rolands abound. The opening to INDOOR LIFE's "Gilmore from the Fillmore" sounds like an electro beat played through a Walkman with failing batteries, dragged out and twisted but so groovin', while TIMMY SPENCE's "Brand New Dance" featuring the SLUTS is absolutely fabulous, with a chorus of drag queens ("don't forget the hot pink plastic rat tail teasing comb!"), a xylophone, and theatrical delivery with great vocal variety! BABY BUDDHA travel across electronic new wave sand dunes from another world, HUMAN BEING MEN do a minimal electroclash number so timeless it could have been released just yesterday, WONDERS OF SCIENCE look at the viral nature of gossip and construct a stylized, sassy synth-popper ("we spit upon your flag"), and closers ZRU VOGUE take you on a kaleidoscopic ride through "Nakweda Dream," the perfect last stop to *BART*'s journey underground. There is also a *BART Bay Area Retrograde Vol. 1* too! Get them both with your eyes closed *now*! (LA)
(Dark Entries)

V/A – "Blown Fuses Bloody Ears II" CD

Nine bands with two tracks apiece, mostly high-energy punk rock'n'roll with a coupla heavy sludge bangers thrown in. Highlights include MOTHER'S WHISKEY (the opener, killer stoner track), THORNE (more heavy stuff) and DARTGUN AND THE VIGNETTES (ultra glam party rock, kinda like HEDWIG or some shit; into it). Some clunkers, but that's a matter of my personal taste more than one of competency, since all of the bands are at least in the dreaded "good at what they do" category…I just don't need the faux snotty hooks of the MORMON TRANNYS in my life. It's nothing personal. (WN)
(Volume Bomb, no info)

V/A – "Gonerfest 11" EP

Only available at Gonerfest, attendees got this 7" EP as a bonus for buying a festival pass. There are two songs on the A-Side. SICK THOUGHTS cover GIZMOS' "Human Garbage Disposal." It is the best thing on this 7". However, it seems kind of subdued. I would have liked SICK THOUGHTS to do a noisier, wilder version like some of their most recent recordings (see "Moral Sickness," reviewed in this issue). Then there's TEDDY & THE MOFOS which features Ted Niemiec of GIZMOS doing "Kiss Of The Lass." It is an extra lo-fi song that sounds like it was recorded live. On the B-Side is an interview with the first incarnation of the GIZMOS (the one that played Gonerfest this year) by Tom Scharpling of *The Best Show On WMFU*. The interview is separate interviews with band members that have been combined to seem like they are all in the same room, interspersed with some GIZMOS' music. It is not exactly seamless. The interview is not especially enlightening ("Are you guys going to bring it for Gonerfest?"), but it is interesting if you're a fan. (CK)
(Goner / Gulcher)

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Blank TV: blanktv.com
Blast of Silence: Blastofsilence.org
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Boss Hoss: bosshossrecords.it
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Wharf Cat: wharfcatrecords.com
What's Left?: whatsleftrecords.org
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DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide contact information and a postpaid price with your demo! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Lydia Athanasopoulou, Vanessa Asswipe, Matt Badenhop, Robert Collins, Greg Harvester, Jason Ryan, and Shit Zoo.

BARON SAMEDI – *Dollars Eye* – Killer demented Spanish psych/garage rock shits with ultra twisted vocals. There are obvious references for the swagger of tracks like "Zombie King," while the majority of these are sweaty stomps that will creep under your skin like a parasite. Really good. (Robert) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, baron-samedi.bandcamp.com)

THE BEDS – The BEDS play deranged, maniacal noise rock that trudges along as everything sounds like a discordant mess. The vocals swim through each song in a sea of reverb, trying to find room to breathe but never quite reaching the surface. There's a hint of JESUS LIZARD sneaking though this, but only vaguely. Each side ends with quieter, more ambient instrumentals that feel like a natural extension of the band. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, ranchrecords.bigcartel.com)

BLACK ROSE BAND – *Road Kill From the Lost Bayou/Boogie Woogie Wasteland* – Hardened by the road, you're an ex-boxcar dude in search of some twangy blues-rock to ride that pipeline through your brain. What're you lookin' for pal? Something with the backbone of GANG GREEN but the heart of DEAD MOON? Well sir, get yourself a handle of this BLACK ROSE BAND! This fucker's got some banjo! There is a lot of good music here, housed in an attractive double cassette case. I wish the vocals were set back a bit in the mix, but he definitely has a rough "I don't care where you want me in the mix" attitude. I concede; this is probably the vocal production I'm not used to, actually. The music is punk, slightly metal-influenced bog stomping' blues. BLACK ROSE BAND has lots of talent but it never sounds pretentious. I swear if I were really drunk on whiskey this would make me very happy. But I'm not. My gut tells me if you dig anything I've said here you'd get a solid bang for your buck—each song is its own story and vibe and there are certainly a few real gems. I know I'll revisit this just when I need it most. (Jason) (17-song double cassette, lyrics not included, goner-records.com)

BLACK SS – *Animals* – Relentless Syracuse straightedge—pitbull vocals fronting a shit heap of primal fury. There are breakdowns (I mean, obviously, right?), but this shit is *fast* and doesn't let up even when it slows down. Lyrics address The Edge in an eye-opening manner, assailing behaviors and attitudes instead of people themselves…refreshing and intelligent negativity perhaps? If you're going to take a six-year break from releasing music, then when you let one fly it needs to be a killer—BLACK SS did that. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, bleedingedges.bigcartel.com)

BLACKHOLE – *Deeper* – Tight and tough hardcore from Springfield, Missouri, but resembling some hardcore from the East Coast: metallic guitar tone, pounding drums, tough-ass dude vocals, heavy-ass breakdowns, and an all-around spiffy recording and mixing job. Sound familiar? I will say that lyrically they seem very passionate about what they're doing and the music is totally solid, but this is sort of dude-hardcore never appealed too much to me. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, workethicrecords.com)

BROWN – *Take a Sip* – The vocals sound like Kurt Cobain and the music sounds like CREED. I'm doing a face palm and shaking my head. (Vanessa) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, everythingwentbrown.bandcamp.com)

BUMMED – Total college dream pop stuffs to be filed alongside SUNDAYS or OCEAN BLUE. Three guitars that meander between 4AD/shoegaze and DINOSAUR JR. and light, lilting minimal vocals that unfortunately fit with the rest of the band only as an apparent afterthought (though the actual delivery is good). The drums are the only hint that these people might have emerged from the punk world. It's interesting, and there are certainly good moments (like every second of "Dream 14"). (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, $8 ppd c/o Club Bummed, 42 Lopez St., Cambridge, MA 02139, b-u-m-m-e-d.bandcamp.com)

C4SERVICE – *First Burst* – Melodic punk with a mid-paced tempo that feels like it wants to unleash, which gives the whole thing a certain appealing tension. Female vocals are gruff and throaty, and along with the guitar they make the band seem more aggressive than they actually are, which is also rather appealing. Songs are pretty basic punk, but no one ever said this shit needs to be groundbreaking. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $8ppd c/o Nico Holthaus, Hansaring 9, 48755 Münster, GERMANY, c4service.net)

CAL AND THE CALORIES – For the uninitiated, CAL AND THE CALORIES is the more melodic and poppier alter-ego of LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS, though still filtered through a layer of trash with a garage-punk vibe. Only two songs on this tape and only one original: "Plop" is a distorted bass-driven, mid-tempo winner of a song about longing for a girl at the candy store…having your guts all tied up and feeling nervous. Stomach sick. Side B is a cover of the BOBBY DARIN hit, "Splish Splash", which CAL makes all his own. A+. (Greg) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, ratkingrecords.com)

CARZINOGENZ – *Cancinogenz Rule* – A deranged, rolling racket, this is raging and pissed. The bassline is brooding and the guitars are sharp, and the tone is discordant (but not noize) and everything is frantic. By the time it took me to type up that sentence, the tape was already over! This looks mean, with its knight with a cigarette for a head spearing a human heart with his lance; it sounds mean, with a shambolic mix and vocals that cut through it all like shards of glass; and it most probably is mean, with lyrics like "The sun is bright / The mood is just right / You people are happy…and I HATE IT!" Or they could just be moron cretins, as a friend put it, with a cut'n'paste modified message from the Surgeon General saying "Women should not drive a car" and "socialized sluts" as the first lyric. Ugh, I'd rather be stuck in traffic smoking a cigarette! (Lydia) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, carcinogenz.bandcamp.com)

CLOSE TO THE EDGE – No bullshit NYHC in the grand tradition of GORILLA BISCUITS, MADBALL, and CRO-MAGS. There are a couple of parts where the vocalist tries to "sing" and he should definitely stay out of that realm because our boy can't really hit the notes, but when he's screaming like a pissed bulldog, it's pretty sick. Gang vocals, breakdowns, hardcore pride, the scene…it's all there. The breakdown on "Vice Grip" will make you want to slow mosh with all your bros in the pit. Check it out. Former members of ABJECT. (Greg) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, cttenyhc.bandcamp.com)

COLD SKIN – *6 Song Demo* – Melodic, up-tempo post-punk stuff from Florida with people from bands that people like. I'm thinking other people will like this too. It has poppy, reverbed leads that instantly remind me of a lot of the Swede/Danish groups of the mid-2000s. For all the tags that might get thrown at this sound (goth or what-have-you), it's still a punk band. EP out soon. (Shit) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, coldskins.bandcamp.com)

COMBAT KNIFE – Hailing from Olympia/Portland, COMBAT KNIFE is a "members of" band, but in a just world this demo would have found its way out of the Pacific NW regardless of its lineage. Gruff vocals barking over some fast and pogo-able fuzzed-out riffs; think BLAZING EYE but with maybe a touch more USHC. Like BLAZING EYE, I can't recommend this enough. The whole tape is solid straight through, but the rhythm section on "Unending Scionic Warfare" is so fucking sick...that's all. (Shit) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, schizoidunit.storenvy.com)

COMMONERS – Yes! COMMONERS are from Austin, TX and play full-on, ugly hardcore. I'm hearing a little bit of eastern Euro influence in the guitar, but maybe this is just because they're using a chorus pedal. Lyrics deal with feeling hopeless and fucked up, telling rape apologists to fuck off, and feeling isolated. What more do you

want? This is dirty, pissed, and awesome. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, commonersatx.bandcamp.com)

COSTANZA – *Serenity Now* – Joke bands and gimmicks typically repel me, but this is pretty funny! This is a George Costanza themed D-beat project. The cover art is a mash up of the first DISCHARGE EP and George's face, and (of course) COSTANZA written in DISCHARGE letters. Some select song titles include "Double Dip," "Dip My Bald Head In Oil," and "She's Bald, Bald, Bald!" The songs are comprised of a drum-machine D-beat, metallic guitars, distorted and barked vocals (plenty of "ughs"), and *Seinfeld* sound-clips to tie it all together. You could say that this was an incredible waste of time, but I would argue that it is hilarious and I intend to send the extra copies to friends. (Matt) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, soundcloud.com/costanza-pdx)

COTILLION – A blend of melodic hardcore and emo from this Chicago band. Very '90s, with a fairly raw recording, COTILLION trade off between slow, spastic and fast tempos, paired with the appropriate talking/screaming vocal accompaniments. Lyrics are poetic. Though it's not my preferred style, the result is confident and more unique than your average throwback attempt. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, cotillion@gmail.com)

THE DEATH – Some atypical and off-kilter noise pop garage from Japan, featuring members of NO (Japan) and ENCROACHED. This is jerky, surfy, and, at times, scrappy (in a cool way) with a pretty noisy production that gives it an added edge. The sassy vocalist delivers winning cheekiness and eye-rolling attitude that fits the static atmosphere throughout. The full, bouncy basslines and tremolo dreaminess give it a sweeter touch, but the enthusiastic (sometimes even frenetic) delivery keeps you on your toes! For fans into variety and no hard rules. (Lydia) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Kazuhiro Sazanami, B1F, 2-9-5, Nishishinsaibashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, 5420086, Japan)

DECADES/FAILURES – *002* – Dreary dark synth rehash done perfectly. Like seriously, there's no sense dissecting this tape, because if you are even a little intrigued by the (massive) wave of retro synth/new wave/smoke machine goth dance club sounds taking over the punk world, then you need this jammer. Now. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, deadtankrecords)

DEVIL'S DICK – *Sexual Servitude to Satan* – Oh, this is alright. DEVIL'S DICK (from the underpants of Hell I presume, err, I mean, Montreal) kick off their three-dong tape with "Sucking Satan's Cock." We actually sucked Satan's cock for a long time but never reached climax. So grim. Piss poor heavy evil shit right here. Strange blasphemer band with a hard-on pumping blackened smut punk with rhythmic, nauseating, satisfaction. It's like the CRAMPS music and VAGINORS vocals in the fun house of mirrors. Their namesake jam has a few more verses than the previous. The vocal emphasis is pretty repetitive but unique. The simple three-chord throb is disfigured and quite sufficient. The final emission "Sexual Sinner" is a big horny boner. Spiking that pun right into the ground, thank you very much. Also for fans of SYPHILITC VAGINAS or BONE AWL. Damn, might as well say it: ZOUO too. I have #53/69. Grab DEVIL'S DICK now—the perfect holiday gift for your mom. (Jason) (3-shlong cassette, lyrics not included)

DIA FINAL – *Represión* – Catchy 1-2 hardcore from LA, this tape oozes vitality; it probably has something to do with the melodic Spanish vocals that utilize reverb not to wash out, but to flow over each song. DIA FINAL do not let up on *Represión*, conveying well-thought out lyrics through stripped down thrashing SoCal punk. Not to be confused with the DÍA FINAL from Mexico. (Shit) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, diafinalpunx@gmail.com)

DISSLATE – *Vol. I* – Here is the first of two tapes from DISSLATE this month. As you might suspect, *Vol. I* is the first demo from 2013 and it is just eight tracks of fast hardcore. Members are split between LA and Mexicali and DISSLATE draw influence from the area's rich tradition of thrashing punk. They know what they're doing here. (Shit) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, xdisslatex@gmail.com)

DISSLATE – *Tiempos Cruciales* – This is actually more of a demo pt. two: a rehearsal tape that contains several songs previously recorded on the *Vol. I* demo. Something about this recording just works better for me. The vocals are pushed just enough further into raw territory here and the music just has the extra touch of unhinged. Even though the differences here are audibly minimal, the whole tape is somehow elevated way beyond its predecessor. *Vol. I* is pretty good, but *Tiempos Cruciales* is really fucking good. The numbering suggests it's limited to 50 copies, so good luck. (Shit) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, xdisslatex@gmail.com)

DOBERMAN – Only two tracks and hardly any info on this one. Both tracks are well over ten minutes and delve into the ambient drone world. Side A is like a comfortable blanket of noise punctuated by some blips and muffled, indistinct vocals. It's soothing. Side B is along the same lines, but has some minimal percussion and sounds more industrial. Same tortured, muffled vocals appear throughout the track. It's dark. I'm in. (Greg) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, castlebravotapes.bandcamp.com)

ELECTRIC STREET QUEENS – *Live From Your Dreams, We're the Electric Street Queens* – This reminds me of a house band that would play on a late night talk show, or music that would be played during a burlesque show or inside a brothel. Song titles include: "Brew-ha-ha," "Beefcake Baby," and "Dontcha Wanna Work at the Brewery?" Some of the songs stop mid-way through so the band can do short skits. Maybe they have a background in theater. The singer's voice is kind of witchy and dramatic, which I liked. The artwork is cool, too. (Vanessa) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, electricstreetqueens@gmail.com, klyam.com)

THE EX-BOYFRIENDS – *Not Much, Too Late: Hits 2003-2010* – I feel like there's a hidden camera somewhere and the entire *MRR* staff is gonna pop out and be all like *"Haha!! We just wanted to see what you would do when you pressed play on a worthless piece of shit would-be third rate Sunset Strip reject trying to reinvent themselves as a fourth rate glam band,"* and then they'll hand me a beer and we will laugh at how bad this shit is and we will listen to some punk. If you want to hear a band that sounds like cocaine and bad ideas in a blender, might I suggest TT QUICK, the NIPPLE 5, or TEEZE? Because those bands are actually good. And for the record, I tried this tape again when I was drunk…shit still sucks. (Robert) (15-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com)

FASSBENDER – Fairly ripping hardcore/thrash from California. The vocal delivery reminds me slightly of Devon from WHAT HAPPENS NEXT / CONQUEST FOR DEATH, but less stoked…because I don't know many people as stoked as that guy. The whole thing is pretty energetic and fun, but the occasional wah guitar break really throws me off—luckily none of the songs really last longer than a minute and a half. (Greg) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, fassbender.bandcamp.com)

FAT VEGAN – *Music to Eat Tofu to* – If the ANGRY SAMOANS started a gimmicky, food-themed band, you'd get FAT VEGAN. The songs are pretty punk and some of them got stuck in my head, but I wouldn't be surprised if this was their first and only release. I don't know how many songs about pupusas I want to hear... (Vanessa) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, saucepanrecords.bandcamp.com)

FREAK VIBE – *Prostration* – I really enjoyed this band's last tape and this one sounds a little tighter and more focused, as far as musicianship goes. FREAK VIBE seamlessly melds CRAMPS-style deranged rock'n'roll with slimy, mutated punk to create a real freaky vibe. There're plenty of rock bands out there, but not really enough with a truly fucked sounding, interesting singer like FREAK VIBE. He makes lots of weird noises and uses his voice as its own crazy instrument, not unlike Iggy in the STOOGES or Gibby in BUTTHOLE SURFERS. This is so good. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, casinotrashrecords.bigcartel.com)

GIANT EAGLES – *Giant Egos* – Slick and super fun poppy punk like M.O.T.O. or DICKIES but with a smart and intentional ear towards crafting a potential radio jam. Incredibly addictive tracks, even if you think you don't want to like them. Really good stuff for people who are into things that are good. (Robert) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, StopRecPlay.com)

GIRL / FLARE UP – split tape – Complex without being overly technical, Minneapolis' GIRL (not to be confused with Phil Collins' legendary band of the same name) accent crushing low end hardcore with effortless blasts and shouted female vocals. FLARE UP from Jakarta dish out dual vocal hardcore/grind brutality, no frills whatsoever, just ugliness. This comes from the extremely prolific (but previously unknown to me) Nog Records. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, nogblogofficial.blogspot.com)

INVISIBLE LABOUR – *Put Your Briefs In Your Briefcase* – Angular English math rock on the intro, and then these kids add vocals and I'm yanked back at least 20 years in the best way. Still off-kilter and weird with clean guitars and choppy, erratic drums, but the gruff singing brings to mind California and they are soon joined by a soft(er) croon that sounds like some

laidback surf punk band no one has ever heard. The end result is an intersection of SHELLAC, JAWBREAKER, and MINUTEMEN. Yeah, I know…and I swear it works. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, $8ppd c/o fonzielives@hotmail.com, invisiblelabour.bandcamp.com)

JAIL SEX – Okay, I didn't think a band with the name JAIL SEX would be good, but I like to be proven wrong. They bust out six quick blasts of catchy, pissed hardcore with some elements of '90s US crust. The vocals are almost always over the top and it sounds like the woman singing is constantly on the verge of ripping her vocal cords apart. Shit rules. (Greg) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, jailsexatx@gmail.com, jailsex.bandcamp.com)

KALI YUGA – *The World Outside/Femme Fatale* – The '90s fetishism is fine, but when are punks gonna start cupping the collective balls of '90s *PUNK* instead of the college and alt rock drivel that some of us were trying to get away from? I guess part of the problem is that you can't even tell what angle most of these bands are coming from...but is that even a bad thing? I don't know. One song sounds like TEENAGE FANCLUB, but more calculated and less interesting. Also they are from Italy, and the VELVET UNDERGROUND cover that takes up half of the tape is completely unnecessary. (Robert) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, StopRecPlay.com)

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR – Okay, seriously, every song on this tape sounds like a completely different band. I had to double check and make sure it was just one band. It's cool. The first song was just kind of sloppy punk with bored, almost goth vocals and I didn't care for it. Then, they have a new wavey song, an experimental noisy thing, a killer laidback indie rock song, a loop track of guitar effects, etc…This shit is all over the place, but has the feel of mid-'90s noisy rock overall. It's fairly disjointed, but has its own flow to it, which I find to be really engaging. Tight. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, knightstemplar666@gmail.com)

LES VANDALES – This isn't really a demo, but it's a live recording from this French punk band from 1984. People interested in early '80s underground Euro punk might wanna swoop this one up. The vocals remind me of early GOVERNMENT ISSUE mixed with early stabs at USHC. Being that it's a live recording, the sound is pretty muddy, but it sounds like a good time. (Greg) (18-song CD-R, lyrics not included, lesvandales.bandcamp.com)

MAQUINA MUERTA – *Realidad Desesperada* - The thing about D-beat, or any other widely chosen punk sub-genera, is that you gotta do something new and exciting with it in order to stand out from the pack. Put your signature on it. In many cases, band location is something to consider when applying judgments. A D-beat band from Afghanistan, for example, would already be more interesting, even if it was derivative. All that being said, Guadalajara/Mallorca's MAQUINA MUERTA, while being a spot-on, raw, intense D-beat powerhouse, is a bit too "by the numbers" for me. Many punks can't get enough of this stuff. Those people will *love* this. I like it but I think it's forgettable. To not be a complete letdown, I must compliment the drumming. It is the exact way that D-beat needs to be: punchy, charging, and bouncy. Kick and crash hit together every time—that's how you get that perfect pulse. So the foundation is totally there. So much stuff gets described as D-beat nowadays that lacks this simple foundation. Raw punk and D-beat warriors are reading this and calling me a jaded elitist, certainly while blaring this tape. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, Sangre Azul 004, no info)

MISDEMEANORS – *Danger to Society* – Gruff, bare bones US hardcore punk with a blown-out recording and cool riffs. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, misdemeanors.bandcamp.com)

MYSTERIOUS SKIN – Ugh! Fuckin sick hardcore that has some resemblances to 625-style thrashcore/fastcore. I'm gonna keep saying "core" a lot. Every song on here is full-on, leaving no room to breathe. The singer is losing her shit in a way that is similar to NO STATIK or TORSO. No dull moments. No wasted time. This is why you got into hardcore. This is why you're still a punk. Get this and/or get fucked. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, unfortunately, mysteriousskin.bandcamp.com)

OTHERIZED – OTHERIZED is from southern California and they play straightforward punk with slight tinges of hardcore. The woman singing sounds like she's constantly out of breath, even when the song has just started. Every song just sailed by me with no real hooks to keep my interest. Sorry. (Greg) (5 song CD-R, no lyrics included, otherized.bandcamp.com)

SADIST – *Blood Song* – This is mid-paced D-beat and stomping hardcore with bookends of noise that add an ominous, creeping shade to the recording. SADIST blur the territory shared between anarcho-punk and early black metal without really sounding like either of those styles. It's the spirit of this tape that comes through and makes SADIST stand out as something special. This is already sold out from the band over in Boston, but apparently an official bootleg is available from Shithammer Distro out here in the Bay area. Get this. (Shit) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 82, Somerville, MA 02143)

SARA CENTURY – *Curiousity* – Sometimes I get so sick of punk, so thank god for this tape by SARA CENTURY. I've been a fan of Sara's music since 2011 when I first heard her front the band NIGHT NURSES. Sara's voice is witchy and awesome and she's able to transform it with every song. *Curiousity* is definitely her masterpiece. I'm pretty sure she only uses a synth or a keyboard, maybe some guitar parts. Some of the songs have a space vibe and some make you feel like you're in a meadow (*what*?!). I'm not great at describing music, but basically all you need to know is I put this tape on, get stoned, fall asleep, and have a great time. My favorite tracks are "Inside You," "Push and Shove," and "Splinters." You've got the internet, look this up, listen to it and decide for yourself if you like it. Recommended if you use tinctures, like witchy things, like noise music, or need some music to fall asleep to because you hate being awake. (Vanessa) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, tinyamprecords.bandcamp.com, theemzsaracentury@gmail.com)

SECRET TOMBS – *Secretly Yours* – This is alright, but overall it's just a basic rock band, which is fine. It reminds me of the mid '90s when major labels were signing every indie band and every indie band kinda sounded like '70s guitar rock. The singer has a voice that floats somewhere between AC/DC's Brian Johnson and Fred Cole from DEAD MOON. It's decent…not something I'm freaking out over, but it's got some good jams and is definitely worth your time if you're looking for solid rock music. (Greg) (?-song cassette, lyrics included, BHF Records, 620 Charles Way, Braddock, PA 15104, secrettombs.bandcamp.com)

SÉPTIMO CONTINENTE – Hailing from Montreal and featuring members of ILEGAL and SILENT BONES, the now defunct SÉPTIMO CONTINENTE play deathrock influenced punk with singing in both Spanish and Finnish. Someone else has already described this as "raw post-punk" and that sums it up pretty well. Each side is four songs, half recorded in studio and half recorded live. For someone who can only take so much of this style at a time, this tape is a perfect dose. (Shit) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, runstate-tapes.com)

SID YIDDISH AND HIS CANDY STORE HENCHMEN – This is an "improvisational" band (I put that in quotes because I like improv music, but this is more akin to people just fucking around) interpreting Christmas music through percussive instruments and toy keyboards. In short: a terrible hell zone. (Greg) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics included, aleatoryrecords.com)

SLIM PICKINS – This sounds like early to mid-'90s Midwestern pop punk, production values and all. Sing-song-y vocals, solid-state treble-y guitars, and cardboard-sounding drums. The songs are seemingly packed with one million words per track and the content ranges from *90210* to other TV shows to school to being sad. Some comparisons could be drawn to a less cutesy CUB. (Greg) (10-song CD, lyrics included, doomriff@gmail.com)

S.L.I.P. – S.L.I.P. (SONGS OF LOVE, IDEALS AND PEACE) are from Braddock, PA and play straightforward punk rock that reminds me of early ANGRY SAMOANS and a less frenetic version of New York's NANCY. High-pitched vocals carry each song. It's fun, bouncy and energetic. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, BHF Records. 620 Charles Way, Braddock, PA 15104, slipforpeace.bandcamp.com)

SLUGGA – Hell yes! Sardonic, stripped-down, garage-styled clatter that rolls along like a flaming ferris wheel bouncing off rocks and crashing through trees as it tumbles down a hill somewhere in Atlanta, GA. The riffs and drums are driving and upbeat and the vocals are sneering and snotty and go perfectly with the super catchy yet songwriting—I imagine bedlam in the pit because these songs are menacing! "Everywhere is Hate" and "Suffering" are just wedged in my brain like a pike. These guys channel the recent nu mutant crazy spirit that has been infecting teengenerates across northern America like a toxic shock…and boy do they not give a shit, they're probably holed up . Can't wait to see them live! (Lydia) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, Muckman Pizza Point, 184 Rogers St. NE, Suite #301, Atlanta, GA 30317)

SONIC KOOL AID CRASH TEST – This sounds like drugs…like bad drugs you get at some shitty party where there's a sketchy bro playing acoustic guitar in the corner. The vocals are really loud, really blasé, and heavily affected (effected?). The songs drag on in some sort of faux-experimental blanket that could be easily mistaken for "dicking around on guitar." Almost every song is well over five minutes long and it is torture. (Greg) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, sonickoolaid.bandcamp.com)

SUBMISSION – This three-piece from Finland plays industrial/post-punk driven by cold drum machine beats and stark synth. They sound influenced more by early NINE INCH NAILS or SKINNY PUPPY than anything involved in the world of punk. More modern comparisons could be found in Brooklyn's SURVIVAL, but this band is gloomily fronted by a man with a deep voice. This is a strong debut and I feel like further releases will take them into territory that will not be reviewable within these inky pages. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, submissionfin.bandcamp.com)

TEEN FREAK – The singer of this band seems to go from sounding kind of bored to straight-up freaking out, which is a cool style. I'm personally a little sick of so many bands with lots of reverb on the vocals, but I guess that's just a thing now. If that is your thing, you will want to get this thing. The rest of the band is playing fun, straightforward punk that treads into melodic punk, but is more on the Midwestern mutant tip than anything else. Cool shit. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, ratkingrecords.com)

TELEPATHIC LINES – Pop music rooted in '60s songsmiths: jangly acoustics, warm and fuzzy mellow tunes with vocal melodies galore. I keep thinking they are going to rock but they never do. It's like a whole tape of the songs that don't rock from FUN PEOPLE and WEAKERTHANS records, or the adult-rock album that J CHURCH never made. (Robert) (10-song tape, lyrics included; deadtankrecords.com, bakeryoutletrecords.com)

TRUCKDRIVERS – *Через всю карту* – Old school ska/punk from Russia, near the Kazakh border. The vocals roll over the laidback ska parts like a waterfall, and even though this qualifies as "not really my thing," the band does it so well that I want more when the tape is finished. Don't think US incarnations of ska or Western punk, but rather '80s Polish sounds, when infusing ska or reggae was just a part of the game. Highly recommended. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, trdr.bandcamp.com, tdrivers@bk.ru)

TV.STATIC – *They're Here* – At first listen I thought "ehhh…" but after two or three listens I really liked this CD and now, on my twentieth listen, I can't stop. Infectious, fast and raw punk from Oakland, CA, this band tours as a RAMONES cover band and that energy comes through in their songs and live performances. The best track on this is "Feed Me," a bouncy, head-bobbing song where the vocals and guitars come down on you *hard*. It's one of the catchiest songs I've heard all year and it won't leave my head. For a first release, this is great! Another recording coming soon, so keep an eye out. (Vanessa) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, tv.static@hotmail.com, tvstatic.bandcamp.com)

URAL – *Wasteland* – This is pretty slow as far as thrash is concerned. Rock steady headbanging with Sam Kinison vocals. Sort of reminds me of HIRAX with a little SPAZZTIC BLURR. The song writing is very deliberate but the production is super polished so it's asking for some pre-game parking lot mayhem. I definitely need to be in a good mood for this one. Not sure if it's supposed to come across MUCKY PUP funny, but it does for me. No offense, blockheads love this shit and know how to enjoy life. The URAL *Wasteland* tape comes with: decrepit city scene: √. Hordes of the undead society marching onward: √. It's good in the way a bully in the arcade was good. Keeps you sharp. (Jason) (3-song cassette, lyrics included. deathculturetapes.bandcamp.com)

THE VARICAPS – When people in hardcore bands start playing more melodic music, they always think they're power-pop, but this is more like '77 style punk…straightforward, full steam ahead, DIY, no-room-for-sucking '77 style punk. The music is played with the intensity (but not the simplicity) of the RAMONES and I can't shake a vocal comparison to Penelope Houston on "We Are the One." My other references to the vocals are so obscure that they wouldn't even make sense. Basically, what I'm saying is, it's really good. The lyrics are smart and insightful. The band will mow you over in the way that people with a background in hardcore bring to the table. If we're gonna be listening to melodic punk in 2014, this is where I want it to be coming from. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, thevaricaps.bandcamp.com)

VHS – The debut tape from this band is spectacular! I'm pretty sure it's a basement project between a couple of people, but I hope it erupts into a live band. Super catchy songs tripped out into some spacey synth effects. It recalls some hints of LOST SOUNDS and other Reatard-related projects, but way more "out there." Every song has interesting twists and they pull off some next level time signature tricks that sound fluid and natural. Highly recommended! Members of CRIMINAL CODE. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, casinotrashrecords.bandcamp.com)

WATCHER'S WOODS – It might be getting too easy to vomit up throwback goth tunes these days, but we keep lapping it up. Definitely a demo quality recording here (noteworthy when technology enables virtually any bedroom drum machine-driven "band" to sound like XMAL) with the guitars unfortunately buried in the mix while the drum machine seems to be the focus. Male leads are the band's only real shortcoming, but the songs themselves are really good dark dance floor numbers with lyrics that provoke thoughts beyond regurgitated "dark spooky" music drivel. They will be better, but this is a good start. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, watcherswoods.bandcamp.com)

WHITE WHALE – This tidal trident from Buffalo delivers abrupt, grumbly bass-driven punk with loose high-end guitar tones from the depths. There's a sort of surf vibe spy-drama within MINUTEMEN roving grooves that round this tape out with immense indie flavor and echoed punk vocals. It's an easy going and poignant tempo, which balances indie rock flavor and punk wherewithal. This is a fresh new tape with exciting song writing for the post-hardcore and the garage rock dancer set. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, subjectrecords.bigcartel.com)

WOOLWORM – *False Stoicism* – Really ugly one-man project from Nova Scotia. There are moments with primitive black metal undertones, but the base of this demo is raw and aggressive punk rock, distorted to death and delivered with punishing intensity. Layers of atmosphere fill the intros, and they lead the way into one driving track after another. "(I Don't Need Your) Good Vibes" is clearly the hit—almost catchy but soooo negative. Great shit. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 67 Roosevelt Ave, B2N 1B7 Truro, Nova Scotia, CANADA, woolwormm.bandcamp.com)

YAMANTAKA – Raw as hell recording that complements the esoteric vibe of YAMANTAKA, blown-out hardcore with a bouncy bass tone cutting through, while desperate vocals howl in the background. There's enough variety and structure to keep it interesting and somehow their cover of the CURE's "Grinding Halt" doesn't phase me at all; it just fits and makes sense in the context of the tape as a whole. Recommended for mutant noise punkers. (Shit) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, mutagenzine@gmail.com)

YUM YUCKERS – East Coast influences loom large on this band's first demo. Fitting, since that's where they're from. I'm hearing a bit of that Long Island basement pop sound that will prick up the ears of Dead Broke Rekerds fans. Some reference points can be drawn from LATTERMAN and IRON CHIC, but their vocalist sounds a little like the dude from NEW BOMB TURKS, but only a little. Solid demo for punkers looking for 2014 pop punk and melodic punk. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, digmygraverecords.storeenvy.com)

V/A – *Distortion Faith Vol. 1* – Shucks, are tapes cool! Some come through and it's two songs per side and you're done, and some include close to half an hour of blaring hardcore that has your brain gripped from start to end. Swedish label D-Takt & Råpunk has been putting out some of the best in, you guessed it, D-beat and raw punk and this comp here is no exception. Featuring six crème de la northern hemisphere crème, all of them well immersed in the, you guessed it, D-beat and raw punk sound, each in their own distinct way: Vancouver raw racketeers SNØB, Sweden's no-frills aggression WARCHILD, Russia's psychotic, primal fury BLOODSUCKERS (super into it), Japan's cerebral noisemakers KAFKA (top-notch), Sweden's "distortion everything" punks PARANOID, and Finland's explosive KOHTI TUHOA, with refreshing vocals and ideas that actually makes D-beat interesting again. Each band offers between two and four tracks apiece, all of them hard-hitters and, sans for one, all of them new and unreleased! Comes with über punk artwork and a fold-out with info on the bands. This label recently suffered a flood and almost lost everything, so they're in the process of restoration, so make sure you spend some of that "fake paypal money" wisely—it's worth it on every level. (Lydia) (16-song cassette, lyrics included, dbeatrawpunk.blogspot.com)

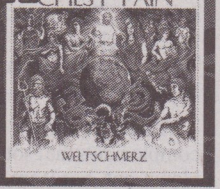
TO LIVE A LIE

ACxDC - Discography LP

An epic conglomeration of all the band's output sans the new LP. Comes on either limited black vinyl or picture disc, Snatch them up before they are all gone.

CHEST PAIN - Weltschmerz LP

Austin, Texas weirdout powerviolence hardcore group put together their opus. Think Gasp meets Swans meets Killing Joke all blended with some Man Is The Bastard.



FISTULA - Vermin Prolificus LP

TLAL's first sludge release and this one will melt your face. In the vein of 16 and Cattle Press, Fistula bring a handful of new tracks that twist and crush. 15 years as a band and still killing it.

STILL HOT: TLAL Vol II LP, The Kill LP, Mindless EP, BearTrap EP
OUT NEXT: Afternoon Gentleman 7", Six Brew Bantha new LP

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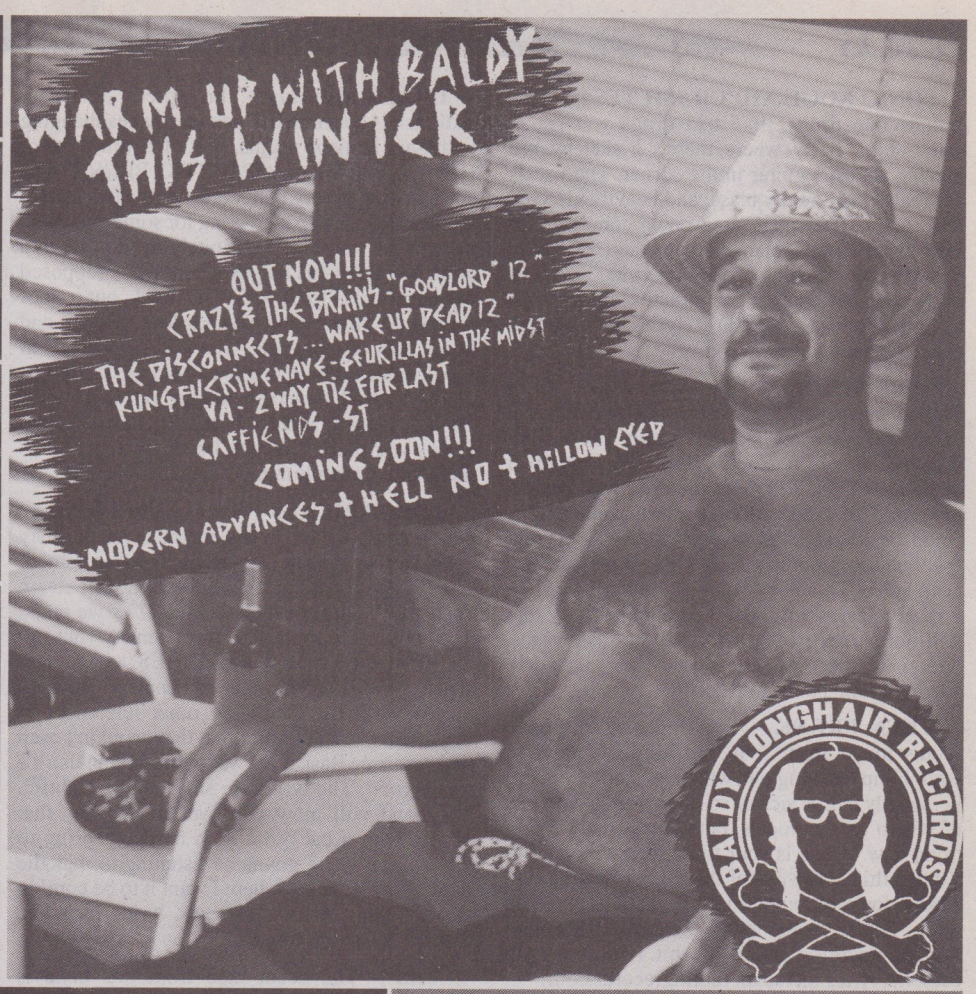

THE MOST FUCKED UP TRIPLE ROCK'N'ROLL RELEASE OF THE 21ST CENTURY THUS FAR... OUT NOW!

THE MONSIEURS
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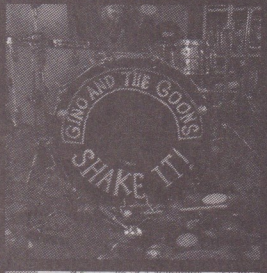
UNRULY, THUGGISH PUNK FROM ex-TUNNEL OF LOVE MASTERMIND'S SAVAGE NEW CREW. BLACK FLAG LEVEL VIOLENCE MEETS TROGGS-WORTHY TUNES.



GINO and the GOONS
"SHAKE IT!" LP / CASSETTE

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BLACK GLAMOUR 4x4 SLOVENLY
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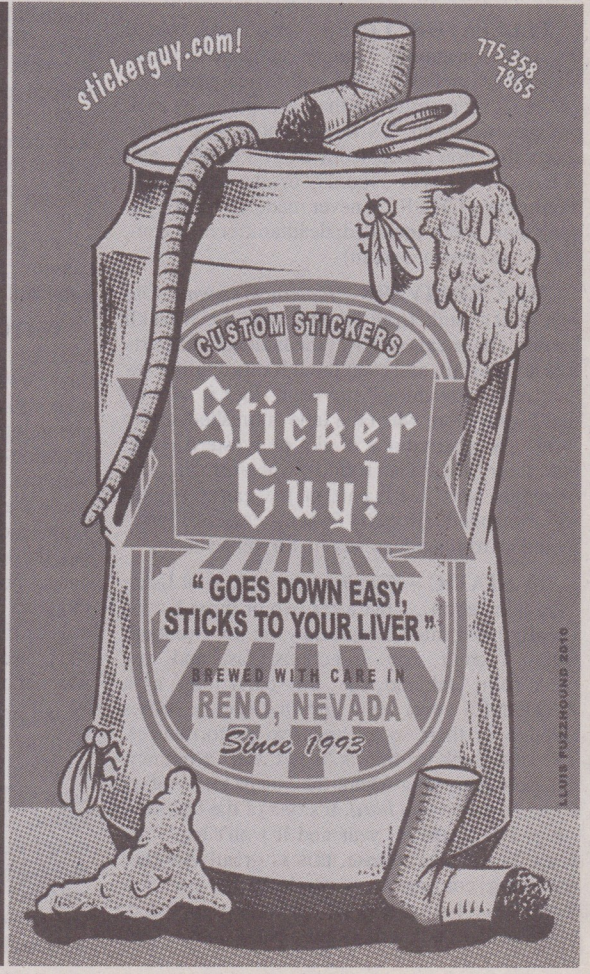

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR Attn: Zines, PO Box 46760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price in your country and worldwide, if you take trades, number of pages, mailing address, website address, and email address.

Reviewers:
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(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DV) Diana Vashti
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulos
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MP) Max Power
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez
(SF) Sami Fink
(VX) Vanessa Asswipe

BALD CACTUS #31
$5 ppd / 24 pgs
A self-proclaimed "stuck in the '80s, cut'n'paste, punk rock zine!" and this very cool publication really does live up to that. It's got interviews with Police Bastard, Jaded Eyes, HDQ, Epic Problem, and Cringer. There's also a review of Protag Fest as well as zine and record reviews. One of my favorite parts about this zine is the list of inspirations for each issue. In the intro column there's a cool list of bands, which provides a sick playlist, and on the back cover there are covers of zines (including an issue of *MRR*!). In the intro column the author said that they almost decided to stop making this zine due to money issues and information becoming out-of-date thanks to social media, so get off your fucking computers and buy, buy, buy! (KC)
baldcactus@gmail.com

CABOOSE #9
$3 / 48 pgs
This issue is subtitled "Masons On Masons: How to Start a Secret Society." The editor's last name is Mason and, as her co-conspirator says, "It's a cheap gag!"—I'm sure it's just a coincidence that I, with the same last name, was assigned to review this...*Mwa ha ha.* A wide range of mostly Western historical examples receive short overviews—there's plenty to read, with 48 pages of mostly text, but I felt a downside was that the broader look results in shallower coverage. She is more focused on the goofy, fun and even socially-helpful aspects of these groups, like the alchemical healers the Rosicrucians, or the incognito mathematicians operating under the name Nicolas Bourbaki. Rightfully emphasized is the mundane nature of most such groups, and how it's the people on the outside who imagine much greater goings on. (The section on the Illuminanti is subtitled "Really Just a Book Club.") Two works cited I could've lived without are the Adam Parfrey book *Ritual America*, which in my limited perusal was not impressive, and of course fucking *Fight Club*, the classic rock of hipster novels, die. I ended up a little let down owing to the expectations I came in with. My idea of a secret society is an underground affinity group at considerable risk for infiltration and prison, while the editor came to it from an interest in steampunk (=science fiction) and discussion groups. While not everything I was looking for, the writing is engaging and the work mostly succeeds on its own terms. (JM)
Liz Mason / PO Box 477553 / Chicago, IL 6067 / caboosezine@gmail.com

DREAMS OF DONUTS #20
$2 US, $3 world, trades OK / 56 pgs
This is what zine-dreams are made of! There are a lot of diary zines and road journals out there, so to hold this gem is something rare. The layout and design shows amazing use of space. Nearly every page is a different style, with great frames! This issue has three sections: two stories and a section of film reviews. The reviews are laid out like a comic with the backstory of what lead to viewing each film, making the section my personal favorite. Other themes include the pains of East Bay housemate hunting and the BBCRC. This zine is a real blast in illustration and story. (DV)
5867 San Pablo Ave. / Oakland, CA 94608 / allychoice@hotmail.com

EL FUTURO NO SE VENDE #1
$10 / 64 pgs
A visual representation of punk in all its fucked up nature and beauty. This photo collection by Mark Ocegueda documents the scene from 2012-2014. The bands featured in this zine include, but are not limited to, Blazing Eye, Gag, S.H.I.T. Destruye y Huye, and Los Crudos, amongst many others. This is the official yearbook of punks that takes the reader into a variety of spaces and moments that are key to the current punk scene. Ocegueda's lens transcends multiple cities, shows, hangouts and festivals through this full color photo zine with amazing cover art that's definitely not to be fucked with. You need to get this, like now. (OG)
verdugodiscos.com

FUN-O-PLANET
$5 / 36 pgs
Last month I bemoaned the horrors that you sometimes encounter in the realms of self-publishing. It's a wide sea of bad printing, worse jokes and a low bar for talent. I was happy to get my hands on Nathan Ward's *Fun-O-Planet* this month. Nathan has done artwork for *MRR* a few times and plays in some Cleveland bands. *Fun-O-Planet* is Nathan's first comic book. It's a loose story about brain-draining aliens and outcast mutants. It touches on themes of media and technology oversaturation, capital's propensity to incur ecological ruin as a tactic of colonization, and the basic human need for a brain. The colors are muted and cover everything. He has a fuzzy style that still seems gross. Pick it up. (EC)
nwardcomics@gmail.com

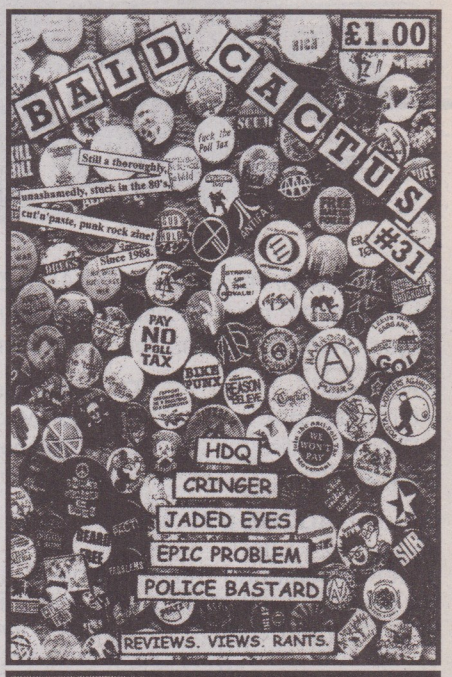
HALLOWEEN COMIX
$3, trades OK / 15 pgs
Simple drawings of someone's intestines spilling out, a fetus in a jar, ghosts coming out of a bong. Another person's sketchbook that gets thrown in my free pile. (VX)
Mnemonic Devices Zine / 1804 9th St. SW, Olympia, WA 98502 / mnemonicdevices@gmail.com

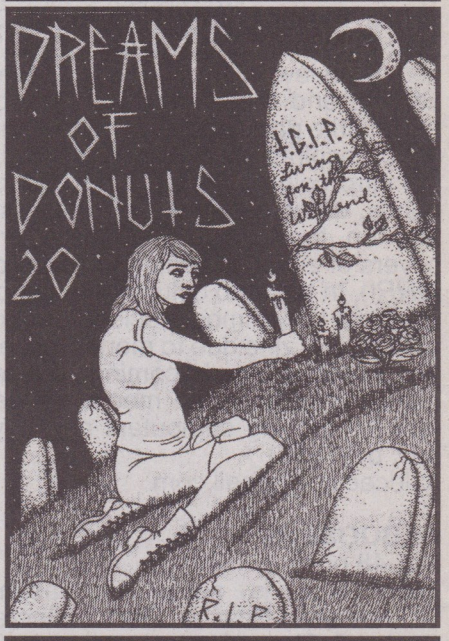
KILL YOUR PARENTS GARDEN #8
$4 ppd / 48 pgs plus poster sized lyrics insert
Great cut'n'paste style fanzine from a punk who recently sold out the suburbs and moved to Chicago, containing a brief reviews section (with takes on two of my favorite tapes of the year: Anti-Zen and Blank Spell!), a Cabeza Twins tour photo diary, and several longer interviews and features. Always a relief to read an interview from someone who asks questions that aren't "What are your names and how did you meet and what instruments do you play?" and the conversation with Anomaly is a particular highlight, touching on feminism, bashing back, queer visibility, and Chicago punk social structures, among other topics. I loved the long feature about Yanka Dyagileva, Soviet punk/folk singer (*not* folk punk, don't get it twisted!), which also offers wider context about the circulation of zines, records, and punk imagery in the USSR, as well as the details of Yanka's often-tragic life. More well researched punk history excavations, please! I know what music I'll be holing up with after this issue of *MRR* goes to print. (GA)
1719 W. Albion Ave, Chicago, IL 60626 / macklinreed@aim.com

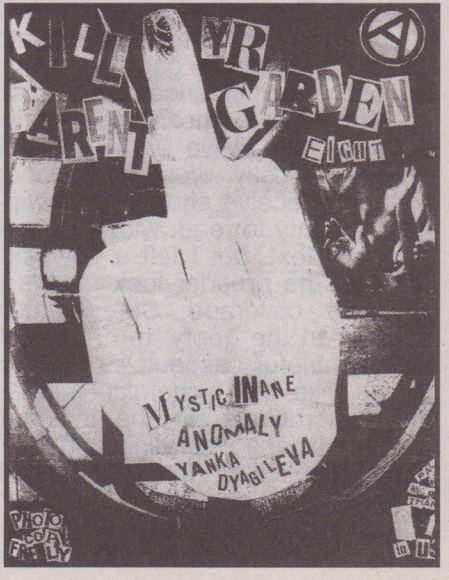
MÉDIOCRITÉE INNÉE
8€ world / 64 pgs / French and English
You need this zine! It's exceptionally ugly and so beautiful to hold and thumb through. A collection of Abraham Díaz's work between 2011 and 2013, a mix of single page comics, longer paneled stories, and some of the sickest artwork for some of the coolest punk bands. The images are gruesome, smelly, and disfigured. Boils and pussing zits, grazed knees and sharp, crooked teeth, all smeared across the fiendish characters; outside the blurry lines, all blending with the equally sordid, sickly backgrounds. Triple-eyed mutant rats, giant militant human-heart-feasting bugs, murderous gutter punks, gluttonous wastoid blobs, shit genies, and sexual delinquents. Pigs, dicks, eyeballs, shit, blood, and guts are a reoccurring theme. Yet, what is the dirtiest of all are the characters' minds. Fuck (up) the world. The mix of colors, paper, inks, pressing, and two-tone effects look totally hand-made, something I don't think I've ever seen before, and it's very impressive. It feels so pleasing to the touch, in juxtaposition to the decadent spewfest inside, which is antisocial fuckery in all its filthy, gory glory. I bet Díaz, this weird genius of off-putting magnificence, doesn't give a hot shit about what I think and he's probably busy drawing a sex scene between him and his sketching pencil, tripping on distilled rat piss or something. Published by the infamous Alex Ratcharge, the anti-saint of unrefined punk grossness. I hope there are copies left. (LA)
ratcharge@gmail.com / ratcharge.com

MUNSTER TIMES #11
free / 50 pgs
At first I thought this was gonna be a zine from the Spanish garage/punk'n'roll label Munster, but it's actually from Australia and not affiliated with said label. Speaking of 'stralia, this is loaded with interviews of acts from "down under". Namely, Fiona Lee Maynard and James Lomas, the New Christs (whom I haven't been reminded about since I used to see their *Born Out of Time* LP when I lived in Santa Cruz). The interview with Primitive Calculators (another old-school Aussie band) is pretty short and gets into their recordings and a bit of the band history. Part of this surprised me, as they mention Ollie Olsen—who collaborated with INXS' Michael Hutchence on the Max Q project. Primitive Calculators were also on the *Dogs in Space* soundtrack with Hutchence (and Iggy, Gang of Four, etc). Brisbane heavy rockers, Hits are also talked to (in a bathroom, no less) and this one comes off pretty funny. OK, there's one US band interviewed but it's just the Dwarves and well, what else needs to be said about them? The last interview is with John Nolan (Bored!, Powder Monkeys, Powerline Sneakers) and gives a good look into some of the music he's done over the years.

There's also stuff like the write up on Monster Fest—which is a horror film fest which reads more like a PR release than an actual article. I'd like to see a real write up on this event or an interview with the organizers instead of finding out there's an award named after a character from *Human Centipede 3* (wait…they made this movie?!). On a similar note, there's another press release for an event in St. Kilda (suburb of Melbourne) called "Punk Journey St. Kilda + Beyond" which is a bunch of punk artifacts from '77-'87, film/video screenings and a photo exhibit. The event sounds cool and all, but then not so much







when there's a VIP "Very Important Punk" part. There's also a long-ass review of a Frenzal Rhomb show, which feels like you had to be there. Additionally, there're a few pages on the good, bad and ugly of football (the non-hand egg type) songs.

One major problem with the format of *Munster Times* is the apostrophes coming up as: "we/re" and "do/nt" which makes it super-annoying. Also, the rudimentary, single corner staple holding this together doesn't help. Though, they get points for having a "(Wrestling) Jobber of the Issue" with the WWF's continual loser "Iron" Mike Sharpe. At best, this will send you down a nice lil' rabbit hole of Aussie rock and punk, as I've been listening to Powder Monkeys, Bored! and Hits while I wrote this. (JD)
c/o Matt Ryan, 17 Heathland Way, Dingley Village, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3172,
facebook.com/MunsterTimesZine, munster_mag@hotmail.com

PILTDOWNLAD #9: Pamphleteria Part One: Shut Up and Publish
$5 / 64 pgs
The "misadventures" of DIY publishing (professionally…like having a company) are chronicled here in part one of three. Taking place in the '90s (my clue was the desktop computer model, early internet references, and the use of a pager) makes it less laughable that anyone would dream big dreams about making a single dollar off publishing. Really it's the story of truly not giving up on a project despite being penniless and kicked out of your house and your car. In the long run, also a story about abuse and wanting to make the most out of whatever you have. Quite a few moments made me say, "Why are you fucking doing that?" as the protagonist makes desperate, fucked up decisions over and over again. It's beautifully quaint in a sick way because it actually makes me feel really old. Followers of first person conversational narration will get a kick. (JB)
Kelly Dessaint / PO Box 22974 / Oakland, CA 94609

PLASTIC BOMB #88
3.50€ / 78 pgs
Very cool German-language punk rock / political zine hailing from Deutschland. It kind of reminds me of this very rag, 'cept for the fact that they have some color pages thrown in there. There are interviews with Against Me!, Kraftklub, the Boys, Crucifix (the now reformed "1984" version) and a bunch of others. There's also a bunch of what seem to be really cool political articles, including Russian Antifa, anti-Ikea and Starbucks writings, and a break down of Nazi imagery. Maybe because it's the 88th issue (I hope I don't have to explain the shit-nificance behind that number) but there seems to be a big focus on [anti] Nazism. Lots of reviews of bands, with some of the tiniest font sizes I've hardly ever seen. Comes with a free CD. (KC)
Postfach 100205 / D-47002 Duisburg /GERMANY /micha@plasticbomb.de / plasticbomb.de

PUNK LIFE ZINE #53
24 pgs
The people at *Punk Life Zine* have been writing and producing this for a while, since 1992 to be exact. This issue, which is the re-introduction to the zine after a two-year hiatus, is centered around disputes with the National Park Service concerning access to the Folklife Festival. Amongst a recollection of the details of this narrative lie a couple of record reviews and recaps on shows and scrambled thoughts. Where did this zine all come together? I'm not sure really. The cover read "A Professional Academic Educational Journal," and whether this was a serious title for the zine or not, it definitely struck me as such. Also, damn, this zine was scattered. Organization is important, punx. (OG)
punklifedc@gmail.com

ROCK N' ROLL VACATION
$4 plus postage / 40 pgs
Anyone who's done this gig for as long as I have can tell you there is a literal legacy of thinking that other people care about the menial day-to-day record of what it's like to be a punk on a tour. Blame it on Rollins or rock journalism or whatever you want, but tour is our great writer's prompt. It can be hard to disjoint the tour narrative from the band itself. The thing that suffers from this is that we may never really flush out the funk that makes these stories so important. Punk tour could be a lasting contribution to the history of social experimentation in communal living. So when all you talk about is great vegan food in Lansing or the awkward social interaction you had at your show in Brooklyn, you do the canon a disservice. You are neglecting the way your brain is challenged and breaking *and* you're having a great time *while* you're constantly physically uncomfortable and spending way too much time in a confined space with other people you have complicated relationships with. Stephie gets in there pretty good.

She weaves a story about a month-long tour through Europe in the summer of 2014 with her band Hysterics. Throughout the zine I'm often struck with how hopeful and optimistic she is, in a way she doesn't have to be. Like the aforementioned legacy of Rollins' *Get In the Van* Stephie encounters the antagonism of the "fan." While Rollins was berated and physically challenged by men who perhaps saw this kind of an interaction as affinity building, Stephie names her opponents "the punisher." He is the guy who gloms onto you after the show and compares your band to another band with women in it (who likely sounds nothing like your band), he is creepy, pushy and draining. She also outlines the "physical punisher," which is not unlike Rollins' antagonist but with the addition of sexual predatory tendencies. An innocent and pleasant conversation about a favorite band turns sinister when his hand reaches out to rest on your thigh or when the trust of the physical intimacy of a mosh pit is thwarted by his hand grazing your ass. Despite the terrible men (who plague every nation and every locale and every small scene) Stephie's mood, while contemplative and introspective, rarely turns dark. Her insights into the van dynamic are essential and genre defining. She snarkily muses, "Anyone who has been on tour knows that the 'Food Bag' always begins as a source of pleasure, and ends as a source of pain". The one time where the turmoil turns inward and punches you in the gut is after the band takes a visit to Auschwitz. Stephie's family were victims of the violence there and it takes an emotional toil on her that lasts for days.

While it's stated early on in a small introduction that this is "raw material" from journals, I can't help but feel that Stephie's voice is focused way more outward than any other journal I've ever encountered. While this makes the zine infinitely more readable than what I have come to expect from these tour diaries, I do question how much of it was written for this purpose or at the very least edited. Perhaps that's simply another writer's observation or even attests to Stephie's unhewn skill. The zine winds down with the dissolution of the band. I've been on these kinds of tours before. Hysterics'

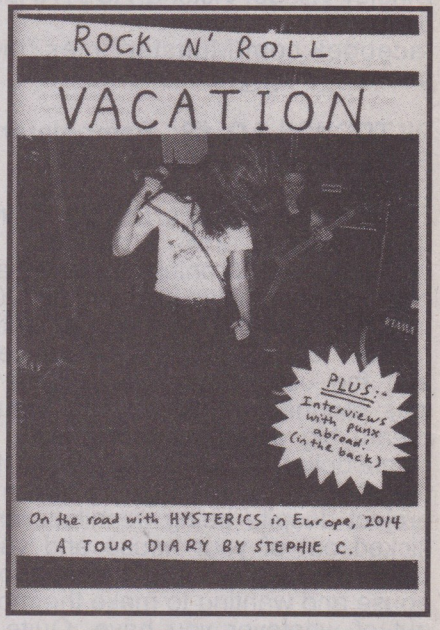
ending seems graceful and loving. The kind of breakup you would wish for. The zine doesn't end when they head back to the states. Stephie includes three interviews with European punks that beg the question: "What is to be done?" (EC)
hystericsoly@gmail.com

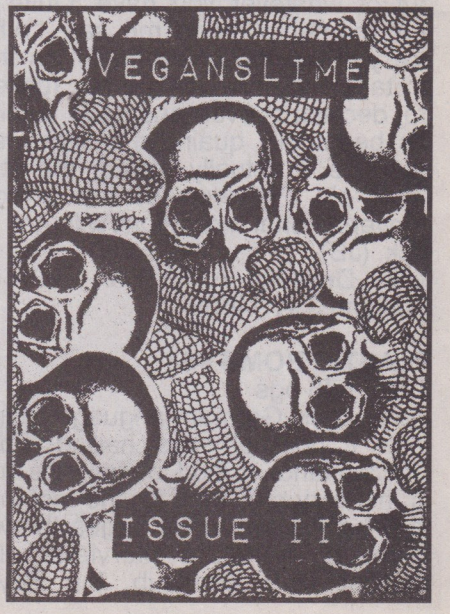
RABBIT, RABBIT, RABBIT #3
99 cents / 24 pgs
Tour stories from this person who goes on tour with Dishpit. East Coast and Midwest are covered along with plenty of pop punk, Baja Blast, gas station food, crust punks, and oogles. Typical trashy fun and crazy tour stories. Also a short people's history of Chicago intertwined with the story of a visit. Cool read, check it out if you are into these types of things. (AP)
colinquackpack@live.com

STAYING IN
free / 16 pgs
I read this during my shitty commute to work this morning, and all day long I kept thinking how terrible it was going to be to go home and slag another zine, but I don't think I can do that now. This little collection of random paragraphs reads more like a punk holiday mass mail out than a zine. There's kind of a "Here's what I've been up to this year, take it easy, Mom!" feel to this thing. Mostly a few thoughts from an apparently super awkward, super shy punk, talking about music he likes, dealing with growing older, growing away from friends, and even physically moving away from his friends and family to contemplate becoming an adult. At first I was pretty bummed to read this. Stories skip from topic to topic, and there seems to be an entire page dedicated to merely mentioning records he wished he bought, an ice cream that he enjoys, and a bar that he likes to go to. Like I said, I thought I was going to tear this to shreds, even though I didn't want to, but I can't. As a super awkward, shy person with a typewriter myself, someone who got old years ago, and even contemplated settling down at one point, I kind of applaud the effort. I hope Joe keeps going. I think this could, eventually, be one of those awkward good reads, the ones where you have no idea why you like it, but you really do. (DZ)
EmailJoeEvansIII@gmail.com

TOXIC FLYER FANZINE #42
$4 / 13 pgs
Basic and short zine featuring the late '70s New Jersey/NY punks Violators, who talk about the places they'd play back in the '70s. Youse might know 'em from their great *KBD* tune "New York Ripper". Then there's an interview with the "patch-on-many-a-spikey-top-punk-jacket band", the Virus. I had *no idea* they were from Philly (somehow I thought they were an old UK82 band). There's absolutely nothing of interest here—in part because I just don't like the band, along with the fact that they have nothing of substance to say. To make it worse, there's a typo where they say, "Yeah we're doing the Fuck You, We Rule Fests in Olk in July." No idea if this is a joke or if they meant to say "UK"?! The other interview is with Gash (also from Philly) which was actually good, as it covers some of singer Tibbie X's work in the BDSM world and how she uses some of this in their live act. It also covers some crazy tour stories and a bit of her playing with Reagan Youth. The music/DVD reviews seem to be 100% positive or just sort of "press-release-ish". The last page has write-ups on two comic cons (NYC and Baltimore) and a Otakon convention (for anime). This zine needs more interviews like the Gash one and less of the sort of overall slapdash effort. (JD
c/o Billy Whitfiled, PO Box 39158, Baltimore, MD 21212

VEGANSLIME #2
£1 / 42 pgs
For my second time reviewing this vegan cookzine, I thought I'd try out a couple of the recipes (of which there are many, categorized like your average cookbook). The avocado cream fusilli is extremely rich, and while this would make a great cream sauce base for a different dish, it's pretty flavorless, and would've maybe benefitted from either doubling all the spices used, or used fresh instead of powdered. The tofu-based chicken salad has the right idea in terms of using frozen-then-thawed tofu for the fake chicken, which I've also done when making soups. It wasn't bad, maybe slightly under-seasoned on its own, but I made several sandwiches with it over the following days, and it was great with the right seasonings. Maybe don't follow these recipes to the letter, but use them as a good starting point. Other than that, cool cut-and-paste layout, and a few interviews interspersed between the recipes. (DG)
veganslime@gmail.com





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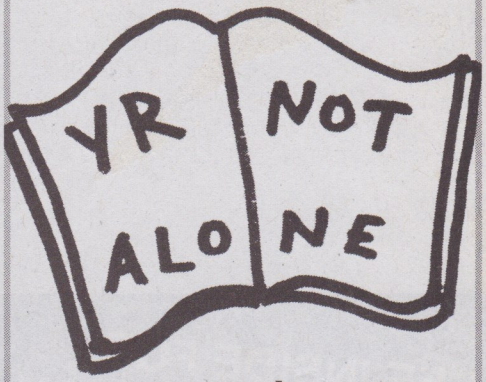

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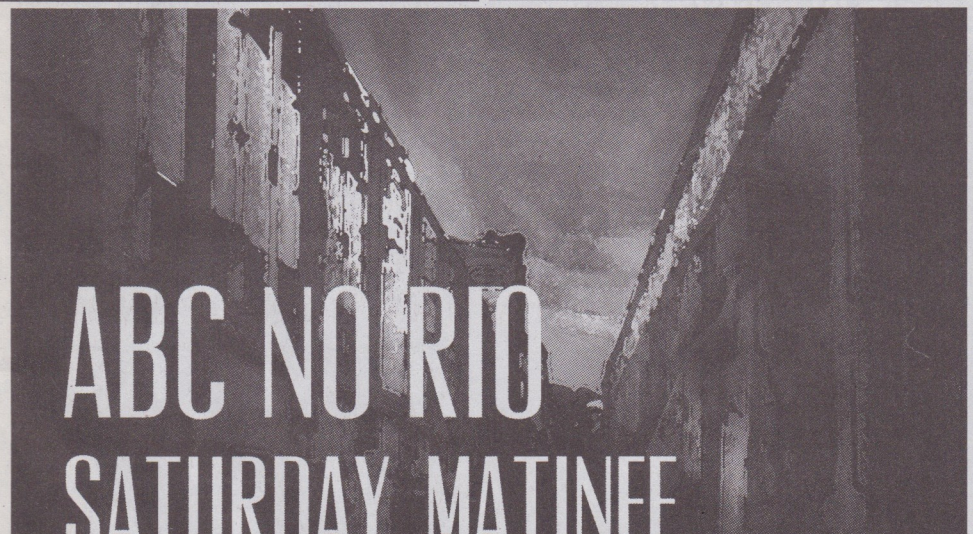

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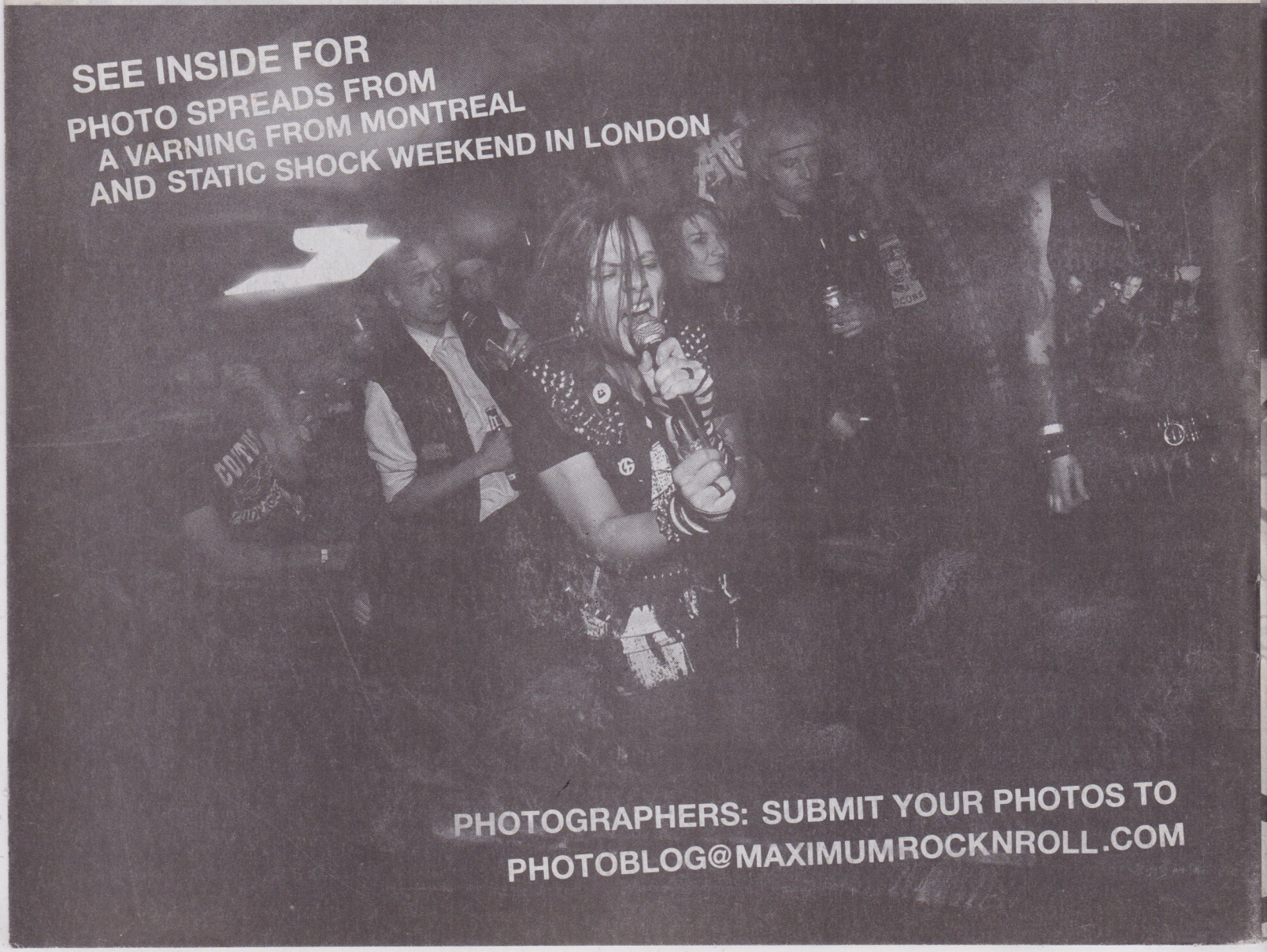
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